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The FOURTH EDITION, IMPROVED and CORRECTED,
With a large ADDITION of Critical ILLUSTRATIONS and Explanatory REMARKS.

THE

HOUSE of PEERESSES.

OR,

FEMALE ORATORY.

[PRICE HALF A CROWN.]

By virtue of an Order of the HOUSE of PEERESSES,
I do appoint G. KEARSLY of Fleet-ſtreet,
LONDON, to Print and Publiſh theſe DEBATES.

C****RS, LADY PRESIDENT.

BRITISH MUSEUM

The FOURTH EDITION, IMPROVED and CORRECTED,
With a large ADDITION of Critical ILLUSTRATIONS and Explanatory REMARKS.

THE

HOUSE of PEERESSES:

OR,

FEMALE ORATORY.

CONTAINING

The Debates of ſeveral PEERESSES on the BISHOP of LANDAFF's

BILL

For the more effectual Diſcouragement of the Crime of

ADULTERY.

PRINCIPAL SPEAKERS,

Ducheſs of G——n,
Counteſs Dowager of Hu—n,
Lady Cr——n,
Counteſs of D———th,
Ducheſs Dowager of B——d,
Lady G———r,
Counteſs of N——t,
Ducheſs of L———,
Lady P———,
Counteſs Dowager of H——n, &c.

PRESIDENT,

A****A BA****ss C*****S, late MA*******ss of C********N.

I will rather truſt a thief to walk my ambling gelding, than my wife with herſelf: then ſhe ruminates, then ſhe deviſes; and what they think in their hearts they may effect, they will break their hearts but they will effect.

SHAKESPEARE's Merry Wives of Windſor.

LONDON:
Printed for G. KEARSLY, Fleet-ſtreet.

M.DCC LXXIX.

BRITISH MUSEUM

To the LADIES of GREAT BRITAIN and IRELAND.

WHEREAS we the Wives and Dowagers of Engliſh Peers have thought fit and convenient to call a General Aſſembly, and in conſequence of ſuch proceeding have on the firſt day of our Seſſion effectually reverſed, annulled, and rendered of none effect the Right Reverend the Lord Biſhop of L——'s Bill for the prevention of Adultery: Be it known and certified unto all Women by theſe preſents, that in caſe of any indirect or covert oppoſition made by the Male-Eſtates of this realm, ſuch females as ſhall be declared capable to ſerve the High Court of Parl———t now aſſembled, are expected, in obedience to orders iſſued out for that purpoſe, forthwith to repair to the reſpective deſtinations appointed for rendezvous, and after receiving proper inſtructions, the ſaid females are commanded, on pain of ſuch forfeiture as the authority of a court martial ſhall inflict, to take, burn, or in any other wiſe deſtroy ſuch of the enemies garriſons or other places of defence as ſhall impede the progreſs of the ſaid forces. And that the juſtice of our cauſe, its importance to the nation in general, and chiefly to the Female Sex, may admit of no controverſy, We have, by virtue of an order from our moſt honorable houſe, conſtituted and appointed GEORGE KEARSLY *to print theſe our Reſolutions and Debates.*

C———S, LADY PRESIDENT.

Y 4°

PRINCIPAL SPEAKERS.

PRESIDENT,

A——a D'A——y B——ſs C——rs, late M——s of C——n.

Counteſs Dowager of H—g—n.
Counteſs of D———y.
Counteſs Dowager of Hu——n.
Lady C———n.
Counteſs of D———h.
Ducheſs of D———re.
Counteſs of A———n.
Counteſs of C—ke.
Ducheſs of B——d.
Lady G———r.
Dowager Lady St——e.
Ducheſs of G———n.
The Hon. Mrs. N——.

Lady N——.
Ducheſs of L——.
Lady A——r.
Dowager Counteſs of Ha—g—n.
Lady T——d.
Lady L——n.
Lady F———th.
Ducheſs of A——le.
Her R—l H——ſs the D——ſs of G———r.
Lady P—l—t.
Lady E——x.

PROTESTING LADIES.

Ab—d—n.
B—f—t.
D———th.
D——-ſh—re.
H—tf—d.
Le———r.

L—l—n.
M—ch—r.
P——y.
R——nd.
Ru——d.
Sp——r.

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At—— G——l,	Sir J—s L——r,	Lady L—nſ—gh,
S—r G———l,	Mr. —— W——e,	T—p—m B——ck,
Earl of Ef—m,	Earl of T——l,	Earl of Ch——d,
Sir John F——g,	Dr. P——e,	Sir W—m de G—y,
Earl Nu——t,	Bp of P———h,	Sir L——e D——s,
Lord Al—n P—y,	Sir Hugh P——r,	Lord Ir—m, &c. &c. &c.
Mr. Mac-p——n,	P——e of W——,	

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FEMALE ORATORY.

IN purſuance to a general conſultation held on the ---- of ------, 1779, at Lady ——'s Rooms, for the purpoſe of calling together the Peereſſes of this Realm in urgent caſes of neceſſity, ſummonſes were iſſued out on the day following to every actual eſpouſed wife, or dowager of the Peers of E-gl--nd, commanding and authorizing the reaſons of their attendance on the — day of March 1779, for the joint defence of their natural and *acquired* privileges. In oppoſition to this unprecedented mode of government, the L--ds and C-m--ns, with the advice of his ——, in Parliament aſſembled, unanimouſly paſſed a Bill, ſtrictly enjoining all ſuch of his ——'s officers as ſhould at that period be engaged in the duties of preſerving decorum and regularity in thoſe honorable houſes of aſſembly, to prevent, to the utmoſt of their abilities, and on pain of forfeiture of their emoluments, any precipitate or violent attack that might be made by the P----ſſ-s of this iſland, with intention to appropriate ſuch houſes to the purpoſe of unconſtitutional and treaſonable debate. Secret emiſſaries were commiſſioned to ſound the intentions of theſe right honorable advocates for non-obedience, and at the ſame time to throw out hints of the repugnance they muſt expect from the *male* guardians of their *legal* freedom *. This procedure was conſidered as a ſtroke of the ſoundeſt policy; for, ſaid the noble Lord, who propoſed the plan †, " It " will effectually convince them how fruitleſs an attempt of this " kind muſt prove in the end, and by that means ſave, if not the " lives, at leaſt the perſons of many of our ſex; and ſecondarily, " the world will ſpeak of this female inſurrection, merely as a

* Experience makes men wiſe. The ladies of the laſt age might have been intimidated by menacing proclamations. Their preſent very glorious ſucceſſors are more partial to fair means.

† Some ſuppoſe it was the Earl of C——, others the Duke of B——. The firſt conjecture ariſes from domeſtic intelligence; the ſecond from foreign.

" merry humor of our wives, not as aiming at the very *eyes* and " *noſes* of their huſbands."

A deliberate enemy will not only gather ſufficient force before he make an attack, but will be cautious to have ſo maturely weighed the efficacy of his counſels, that a ſlight rebuff ſhall not at once ſubvert the purpoſe of his machinations. Had the right honorable Ladies been deaf to the cautions afforded them from the oppoſite party, the grand object they had in view muſt in all probability have fallen to the ground. The ſtrong entrenchments they would have had to encounter at St. St——n's, the determined courage of veteran troops againſt an undiſciplined corps *, are all arguments that make againſt any ſhew of ſucceſs in the female army. The more prudent dowagers, who had ever invariably proceeded on a ſure baſis, were well aware of this, and by dint of moſt eloquent reaſoning, induced the younger, and more daring of the *Congreſs*, to renounce all intentions of acting thus openly. Each ſeemed of opinion that a violent reſiſtance in words was highly laudable, but any farther declaration of their purpoſes detrimental to the infant dawn of the glorious cauſe in view. All the hopes, and all the fears ariſing from the proſpect they had faintly got ſight of, were canvaſſed and ſifted in their morning rides, their evening parties, and their midnight meetings. Ranelagh, the Pantheon, no longer murmured with the reſonant buz of amorous parlies, whiſpered appointments, and tea-table aſſignations. The grand cauſe, the public welfare, the eſſence of female happineſs, were now the ſubjects for diſcuſſion, and the operations to be conſidered for their ſupport, conſtituted the theme of univerſal harangue. Unanimity did not appear to prevail in the choice of a ſenate-houſe. All conſidered an excluſion from the two H—— of P——t as indubitably reſolved by the *male*-contents; and as many other edifices equally adequate to the purpoſe, and more pub-

* Their ladyſhips practice had hitherto been confined to the ſimple ſtorming of ſome home-citadels.

licly

licly convenient for the reſort of individuals, were at command, it was *nem. con.* agreed, that they ſhould lay aſide all thoughts of an immediate hoſtile nature. The great conſideration was now to appoint the particular ſpot, which ſhould be honored with ſo reſpectable a body of Senatreſſes; and here an intereſting debate took place. Each Lady was anxious for the rendezvous ſhe for ſecret reaſons gave preference to *, and exerciſed the moſt abundant eloquence in favour of its ſuperior advantages. Lady P—l—t and Lady †E—x were glowingly warm in defence of their reſpective *endroits* of appointment, and had actually made choice of ſeconds, in conſequence of a virulent ſtile of language introduced by the latter, when they were equally put to ſilence by a conſiderable majority declaring in favor of A——k's ‡. The ſummonſes thus generally diſtributed amongſt the diſaffected members of the league, were therefore expreſſive of the place of deſtination, which, on proper notice previouſly given, was new-modelled, and ſuitably faſhioned for the ſenatorial ſolemnities in agitation. Great were the preparations for the occaſion, and impatient the noble perſonages to diſplay their powers of oratory upon whatever motion the Lady Preſident ſhould introduce. ||A— Lady C——s, late M—— of C——, was, without a diſſenting voice, promoted to the exerciſe of that very honorable office, being judged ſuperior in merit to any dow—r of the aſſembly, and more than equal in her experimental efforts for the preſervation of female prerogative to Lady G——r, or the retired Lady L——— §.

* Since Lady C——'s unfortunate dilemma the receſſes have been more guarded. The ladies therefore who had ſubſcribed, were unwilling to loſe ſo flattering a convenience.

† Her ladyſhip is daughter to the late Admiral B——n: ſhe appears to have inherited the turbulence of ocean in an extraordinary degree.

‡ See the Prologue to *The Separate Maintenance.*

|| Daughter to the Counteſs Dowager of H———.

§ It is difficult to aſcertain whether her ladyſhip is the *actual* daughter of Lord R——. Her *affaire* with Monſ. le Comte d'A——— firſt introduced her to public knowledge; though her mother had exhibited ſo ſplendid an example for earlier imitation. Lord L—— behaved with the ſtricteſt honor on the occaſion, and has had no reaſon to regret her ladyſhip's infidelity, ſince it occaſioned him a more enviable union.

On

On the —— day of March, in obedience to the mandatory dictates to which they had jointly ſworn fidelity, about half paſt one the order of precedency was read, and the ceremony being adjuſted without altercation, notice was given of the Lady Preſident's approach. Obeiſance became a willing tribute to her Ladyſhip's authoritative claim, and was acknowledged her indiſputable due from every party, the Ducheſſes of A.....* and A.....† only excepted. Her Ladyſhip was accompanied to *the houſe* by the C..... Dowager of H.....n and the Ladies C.....n and F....th. The female attendants, deputed to the offices of enforcing all forms and regulations neceſſary to the preſervation of good order, were careful that proper ſolemnity ſhould be obſerved, and paid thoſe honors to Lady C..... which were conſidered as annexed to the Preſidency. The right noble Peereſs, after a pauſe of ſome minutes, graciouſly ſmiled on the aſſembly, and receiving a paper from the hand of the ‡honorable Mrs. N....., addreſſed their Ladyſhips to the following purport:

‖ THE LADY PRESIDENT.

" *Moſt noble and excellent Ladies* §,

" The many favorable circumſtances which have hitherto be-
" fallen me, joined to the unanimous ſolicitations I have ſeverally

* Her Grace's inſinuation that the Q—— had groſsly affronted her, operated no farther than to diſcover her late D—'s ridiculous vanity, and her own very *ill-placed* inſolence. She is daughter to the late —— P——n, Eſq.

† Miſs G——, D—ſs Dow. of H——, and Ducheſs of A——, Baroneſs H——, has been ſo peculiarly diſtinguiſhed in every rank of life, that no enumeration of her merits can be judged neceſſary.

‡ The very *amiable* lady of a right reverend Prelate, unhappily diſtinguiſhed by his ill fortune in the choice of a ——.

‖ It may, perhaps, be wondered how Lady C—— could with propriety be qualified to hold a ſeat in this important aſſembly, being neither the wife or dowager of a P—r.—We anſwer, by virtue of the Engliſh Peerage ſhe is entitled to in her own right.

§ Lady C—— was fearful rhe Parliament might be, but of ſhort exiſtence, and wiſely judged a little adulation neceſſary to invigorate the faint-hearted-

" expe-

" experienced from this right honorable aſſembly, induce me to
" hope that I ſhall not in future give you cauſe to entertain the
" moſt diſtant wiſh of recalling me from an office I think it my
" higheſt happineſs to diſcharge. Fortune, in general deſirous to
" be in good terms with our ſex, has of late been more than uſu-
" ally beneficent to myſelf. * It will be needleſs to enumerate in
" what particulars. You know them, my Ladies, and the world
" knows them: it cannot be otherwiſe, as I have never ſhewn the
" leaſt anxiety for their concealment. *No more of this.* † I feel
" myſelf more than ordinarily bold in the preſence of ſo many friends
" to our welfare, and look back with conſiderable pleaſure on the many
" covert interviews we have held for the great purpoſe of forming
" a general aſſembly. ‡ Indefatigable diligence has at length
" brought it to paſs. We have reached the goal, amidſt a variety
" of difficulties, the fruitleſs barriers to our courage. Huſbands,
" fathers, brothers, proved ineffectual obſtacles in our way. Their
" mangled carcaſes (forgive the expreſſion) are everlaſting tri-
" umphs to our praiſe. Thus far advanced, I am convinced your
" Ladyſhips ambition is awakened to a true ſenſe of your ſitua-
" tion. The ſummit of power is yet to be attained, and firmneſs
" only can accompliſh it. To deſiſt, when the plain lies inviting-
" ly before us, and renounce a prize, which more than amply re-
" pays the expence of the acquiſition, ſhews a futility of judgment,
" and a paſſive irreſolution, incompetent with the tenets you have
" hitherto profeſſed. Relying, therefore, on your Ladyſhips per-
" ſeverance, I ſhall beg leave to call your attention on this firſt day
" of our ſeſſion to a circumſtance, the enormity of which will ſuf-
" ficiently plead in defence of the reſolutions this houſe has ſub-
" mitted to. § The paper I hold contains no leſs than an attack on

" woman

* Her Ladyſhip found no difficulty in obtaining a divorce from Lord C....n

† Othello, Act 5, Scene the laſt.

‡ Her Ladyſhip was a conſtant viſitor in the St-ble Y--d, previous to her reſigning the title of M....ſs

§ Which were on the Con---s party to oppoſe every bill that ſhould be introduced in the houſe of L..ds

" woman in general. * Tired and diſtreſſed at the ill ſucceſs they
" have experienced from rebel Man, the L--ds of the upper houſe
" are exerciſing an unmerited and ſavage vengeance on the weaker
" ſex, and meanly endeavour to *bind* the affections of their eſpouſed
" partners, after having ſtooped to the ſervile office of ſolliciting
" their alliance on any terms. An honorable P----te (Heaven
" bleſs him for the wiſe undertaking!) has ſuffered himſelf to be
" drawn into the ſnare, and though he has not the leaſt intereſted
" concern in any ſuch matter as his bill treats of, † is made a Quix-
" ote for the prevention of other ‡ people's. Your Ladyſhips well
" know, that amongſt a body of Nobility, and thoſe not the moſt
" infallible, § ſome individuals muſt, according to the courſe of
" things, be honored with the ſign of --- -----. To ſtop the
" growth of ſo natural a produce, is equally injurious with the
" fines impoſed on ſuch as forward the culture. Both theſe
" threats are iſſued out againſt us, and forbode immediate execu-
" tion, if proper means are not conſidered for their annihilation.
" For this purpoſe, therefore, my Ladies, we are aſſembled; and
" leſt any one of your Ladyſhips ſhould ſuſpect me of condemning
" a motion, innocent in itſelf, I beg leave to ſupport the ſenti-
" ments I have adopted by referring to the authority of the
" Bill.

* The Biſhop and W..ks may ſhake hands, and forget party animoſities.

† The Hon. Mrs. B----'s exemplary virtues are a moſt admirable pattern for the imitation of Britiſh wives. An unuſual ſhare of underſtanding, with a ſweetneſs of manners, are the amiable and moſt ſtriking *traits* in Mrs. B-- -'s attachment to domeſtic life.

‡ Here may be inſerted any opprobious term that reflects on conjugal diſſention.

§ *Humanum eſt errare*, but wives ſeldom admit the plea.

A BILL,

A

BILL,

INTITULED

An Act for the more effectual Diſcouragement of the Crime of Adultery.

WHEREAS applications to Parliament for Divorces, in caſes of Adultery, have of late become very frequent:

And whereas the preventing of the perſon, on account of whoſe adultery ſuch divorce ſhall be obtained, from being married to the party with whom ſuch adultery ſhall have been committed, or to any other perſon for a certain and limited time, may tend to the diſcouragement of a crime ſo deſtructive to the religion and morals of a people, and ſo pernicious to the peace and good order of ſociety; for effecting the ſame,

May it therefore pleaſe Your MAJESTY

That it may be **enacted; and be it enacted** by the King's moſt Excellent Majeſty, by and with the advice and

and conſent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this preſent Parliament aſſembled, and by the authority of the ſame, that, from and after the end of the preſent ſeſſion of Parliament, whenever any application ſhall be made to Parliament for relief, in the caſe of adultery, and in conſequence of ſuch application, an act of Parliament ſhall paſs for the diſſolution of the marriage between the perſon ſo applying and the perſon complained of as having committed adultery, it ſhall not be lawful for the perſon, on account of whoſe adultery ſuch marriage ſhall be diſſolved, at or after ſuch diſſolution, to marry, or contract marriage with the perſon who ſhall be named in ſuch act as the perſon that has committed adultery with the party complained of.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforeſaid, that it ſhall not be lawful for the perſon, on account of whoſe adultery ſuch marriage ſhall be ſo diſſolved, to marry, or contract marriage with any perſon or perſons whatſoever, till after the expiration of twelve Calendar months, to be computed from the laſt day of the ſeſſion in which ſuch act ſhall paſs.

And be it hereby declared and enacted by the authority aforeſaid, that, if any perſon, on account of whoſe adultery ſuch marriage ſhall be ſo diſſolved, ſhall, at any time

time marry, or contract marriage with the party named in ſuch act to have committed adultery with the perſon complained of; or if ſuch perſon ſhall, within twelve Calendar months from the time of paſſing ſuch act, marry, or contract marriage with any other perſon whatever, ſuch marriage, or contract of marriage, ſhall be deemed unlawful, and abſolutely null and void, to all intents and purpoſes whatſoever.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforeſaid, that no marriage, or contract of marriage, ſhall hereafter be diſſolved in the cauſe of adultery, unleſs, in the bill exhibited for that purpoſe, there be a clauſe or particular words inſerted to declare, that it ſhall not be lawful for the perſon, on account of whoſe adultery ſuch marriage ſhall be ſo diſſolved, to marry, or contract marriage, after ſuch diſſolution, with the perſon named in ſuch bill as the perſon who has committed adultery with the party complained of; or to marry, or contract marriage, with any perſon whatſoever, till after the expiration of twelve Calendar months, to be computed from the laſt day of the ſeſſion in which ſuch act ſhall paſs; and that no bill for diſſolving ſuch marriage ſhall hereafter be received in either Houſe of Parliament, unleſs ſuch clauſe or words be firſt inſerted or contained therein.

LADY PRESIDENT.

" I forbear making any immediate animadverſions on the me-
" rits or deficiencies of the matter in debate, and only counſel your
" Ladyſhips to pay a proper reſpect to your own rights, excluſive
" of any intereſt that may accrue to your huſbands."

LADY D . . . Y. *

Lady D....y commended the zeal with which my Lady Preſident pleaded in defence of female privileges, and declared herſelf critically of an opinion with the noble peereſs in point of encouraging the propagation of ..... Her Ladyſhip mentioned in terms of peculiar ſenſibility the many ſatisfactory moments ſhe had paſſed ſince her firſt rupture with ....., † and urged the expediency of remaining firm to the old cauſe ſo vehemently, that none but a profeſſed ſiſter abbeſs could have withſtood the torrent of her reaſoning. " Recent proof, ſaid the able C....ſs, will ſtand the teſt of
" any verbal evidence, and ſuch proof it is either in your Ladyſhips
" power to acknowledge, or experience. I know the tyranny of
" huſbands, ſhould this bill be ſuffered to have unlimited ſcope. ‡
" I know the inviſible evils teeming in every article, but I leave
" the diſcovery of them to my ſuperiors in council. This I aſ-
" ſert, my M .... and myſelf ſhall oppoſe the whole ſyſtem in all
" its ſtages. I beg leave, when it is thrown out, (which fortune
" cannot but promote) to make a ſecond motion, a motion which
" I flatter myſelf, will tend to ſilence for the future any r...t rev.
" babbler, on the ſubjēct of women's inconſtancy."

Some diſpute ariſing a ſecond time between Lady E...x, § and Lady P...., it was thought neceſſary by the Lady Preſident, that the former ſhould aſk pardon of the houſe, for the unmannerly interruption ſhe had been guilty of. The angry C....ſs took fire at the indig-

* The above Lady gave the firſt *public* ſpecimen of her temper in the Houſe of Commons. Gov. J-----n can explain on what particular.

† The D. of D——, and Mr. St--r, are ſuppoſed to have effected the breach. The former gave his honor to his Grace of H---- that he would amply repair any injuries that might ariſe from Lord D---'s appeal to the houſe of Lords.

‡ Lord D--- gained his point without the Biſhop's helping hand.

§ Vide a new comedy called The Separate Maintenance, wherein the author has complimented her Ladyſhip under the title of Lday.

indignity, and after demoliſhing the *tetes* of ſeveral unfortunate Ladies leſs adepts than herſelf in the myſteries of ſelf-defence, abruptly turned her back on the aſſembly, and vowed an inſtant diſcovery of their foul conſpiracies. The Lady Preſident, in conſequence, ordered her into cuſtody, and by that means robbed the public of an elegant Diſſertation on manual exerciſe, which Lady E.... had prepared in expectation of ſome ſuch debate. * On Lady D....'s reſuming her ſeat, the Ducheſs of A..... roſe, and apologized to the houſe for the indiſcretion her D.... had been guilty of, in authorizing them to expect her negative on the bill, without cauſe of ſuch procedure yet declared in any act or word from herſelf, and added, that ſhe ſhould in all probability be neuter on the occaſion, as the younger members of the aſſembly would, in appearance, conſtitute a ſufficient majority, without requiring any intereſt of their mothers.

The C....ſs Dowager of H.....n ſeconded the noble Dutcheſs in her obſervation on the viſible inequality of the parties, and begged the attention of her right hon. compeereſſes to the following remarks. We beg pardon if there be found any inaccuracies in the ſentiments we have the honor to deliver as her Ladyſhip's. Such errors muſt be imputed to the interruptions Lady H..... met with from cat-calls, hiſſings, and other ſqueaking tokens of diſapprobation, which vociferouſly ſurmounted the calm ſtile of her Ladyſhip's placid oratory.

C.....SS DOW. OF HU.....N.

" Whether, in this unchriſtian † houſe of aſſembly, it be the cuſ-
" tom to addreſs the ſociety in general, or you, Lady Preſident in
" chief, I am ignorant.---[Her Ladyſhip was made acquainted that the houſe was to be addreſſed by the ſpeaker, being of equal dignity with the houſe of L..ds] " Whether I appeal to the one, or
" the

* The noble Peereſs is ſaid to be very eloquent on the ſubject of dogs and horſes. Squire W.... of Rickmanſworth, felt the ponderous weight of her oratory, though the ſubject of vengeance was but *a puppy*.

† Not ſo from its preſent appropriation to their Ladyſhips debates, but on account of the prior purpoſe of its inſtitution. Lord H----- has promiſed a celebrated actreſs, on her Ladyſhip's deceaſe, to convert the C----ſs's conventicles into public theatres.

" the other, I ſhrewdly ſuſpect my voice will not be liſtened to
" with that reſignation, becoming the chaſtiſement I propoſe to
" inflict. My Ladies, vice in every ſhape has ſo pervaded this de-
" voted country, that I deſpair of cloſing my career of life, 'ere
" the manifeſtation of unlooked-for vengeance be a ſignal for the
" deſtination you muſt await with obedience." [A groan from the oppoſite ſide of the houſe]. " I have reaſon to hope that I
" ſhall be called aſide to behold the horrors that are burſting on
" you, previous to the univerſal havock they are commiſſioned to
" deal abroad; and while your Ladyſhips are gaſping for breath,
" and in the very action, ſwallowing whole torrents of fire, and
" brimſtone, I truſt in the many ſecret intimations I have received,*
" that ſome of you will behold me, arrayed like a young virgin in
" a ſnowy veſture, firmly ſeated on the rock of faith, † and unmoved
" at the diſplay of your calamities." (a hiſs for ſome minutes)
" The ſoft viſions, the dear ſlumbers, the unutterable awakenings
" I have been ſenſible of, give me authority to expect a total ex-
" emption from the burning lakes, that are deſtined to become the
" abode of your Ladyſhips." (A cry of " *the motion, the motion,*"
from all ſides of the room). " Permit me, my Ladies, to offer you
" my reflections on the ſubject in queſtion. I reverence matri-
" mony, as a holy inſtitution; and though I have without efficacy
" preached its ſalutary benefits to a wilful .... of my own, ‡ believe
" me it is of infinite ſervice towards curbing the many vicious and
" dangerous paſſions that reſide in the female breaſt. The moſt
" ſacred characters, names which your Ladyſhips have never met
" with but in the Almanack, plead in its defence, and have been
" laborious in wiping from the mind any ſuſpicions it may have
" entertained concerning the impurity of ſuch a connection. § Your
" Ladyſhips are not aſſuredly alarmed with fears of a ſimilar na-
" ture. The conſolation you wiſh to be adminiſtered, is, I dare
" ſay,

* Her Ladyſhip's *effectual calling.* † Faith in the above chimera's.
‡ His Lordſhip prefers the company of the majeſtic Mrs. Y----.
§ *'Tis better to marry than to burn.*

" ſay, of a far different complexion, and ſuch, as my moſt ſan-
" guine endeavors will be unable to furniſh. But truſt me, if ye
" perſevere in a ſyſtem ſo unchaſte, ſo unholy, ſo d--n-ble, you
" will, as the dear * Doctor has often warned the age, you muſt in-
" diſputably go to the d-----. Conſider theſe things, my Ladies,
" reflect on the inſults you have offered to your Lords and Maſters,
" and eſcape the torments due to the ſin of ad-----y." (Here a general hiſs, and repeated clamors) " Your inceſſant lewd-
" neſſes, my Ladies, have angered me to ſuch a height, that I re-
" gard your oppoſition no more than Stephen did the ſhower of
" ſtones, which releaſed him from the wickedneſs of the world.
" As he looked forward to a happier kingdom, ſo do I to the dear
" man, who has taught me to deſpiſe the common intercourſe of
" *human* felicities. In defence of the bill, I will harangue with
" my dying breath, and had I the diſpoſal of the thunder, no in-
" dividual ſhould ſurvive the loſs of her chaſtity. The fraudulent
" diſſembler and herſelf ſhould work out their p-----tion in the
" deepeſt pit of ----." (An univerſal cry of, Order, Order)

LADY C....N †

After the violence of their Ladyſhips tumults was ſomewhat decreaſed, Lady C....n begged leave of the Lady Preſident to note down the noble Peereſs's laſt ſentiment, as dangerous to the community in every ſenſe, but particularly abundant with miſchief to the high court of P--l-----t, there aſſembled; " For, (added Lady C....n) " though I have no apprehenſions that ſuch an event,
" as the ſuperlunary Counteſs hints at, will ever take place, yet I
" judge it treaſonable in any perſon, or perſons, to premeditate the
" perdition of the ſtate, whether the execution of ſuch plot be in-
" tended in this world or the next." The propriety of her Ladyſhip's reaſoning being univerſally allowed, the latter ſentence of

* *De mortuis nil, niſi bonum.*

† Siſter to the E... of B.....y. It is matter of ſurpriſe that her Ladyſhip's delicacy ſhould not have been an obſtacle to the bold attempts ſhe has made in curbing the authority of Lord C---. His Lordſhip wanted much *taming*, though he is now ſo tractable an *animal*.

Lady H.....n's very animated addreſs was copied verbatim, and delivered to the care of ---- ----. Lady C....n propoſed introducing a motion for the impeachment of the right hon. the C..... of H....., at the next ſitting of the houſe, charging the ſaid C..... with wilfully, and maliciouſly threatening to deſtroy the lives of ſuch of his Majeſty's female ſubjects, as ſhould have the reſolution to †----- their huſbands, alſo to impriſon, and by indirect, and in*human* means torture ſuch young fellows, as ſhould have the courage to aid and abet the ſaid females in their patriotic endeavors to the ſaid laudable purpoſe. Lady Hu.....n appeared inſenſible to the articles of impeachment, ſo perſonally directed againſt her, and was awakened from her celeſtial contemplation, merely by the ſilence that ſucceeded Lady C.....'s declaration. The right hon. Dow...r proceeded to condemn the unreaſonable partiality ſhewn to ----dom in terms of undiminiſhed aſperity, and levelled her inveteracy with a ſevere attack on the mixed aſſemblies women are univerſally admitted to from their earlieſt years. Her Ladyſhip traced the negligence ſhewn to morality from the dangerous ſentiments girls were taught to imbibe in their unconfined parties of pleaſure, and derived the grand evils of domeſtic diſcontent from their habitual averſion to retirement. Thoſe particulars of her Ladyſhip's ſpeech, which were delivered with becoming temper, and candor, contained nothing which might not be defended on the moſt reaſonable grounds. Whenever the eccentric widow was induced to take a peep into futurity, that placid moderation was no more the guide of her ſentiments; a wild inconſiſtency of argument formed the leſs convincing ſubſtitute of ſound doctrine.

† *Contradict*, or poſſibly ſomething ſtill more characteriſtic.

C.....SS OF D.....TH. *

Lady D.....th ſeconded the noble Counteſs in her oppoſition to the licentious manners of the age, and declared herſelf perfectly unanimous with Lady H..... in ſupporting the articles of the bill. Her Ladyſhip begged leave to condemn certain indefenſible principles viſible in the noble Dow...r's train of reaſoning, and repreſented them as ſubverſive of the great baſis of true religion and piety. "An amiable ſimplicity of manners (continued Lady D.....) "ſhould be the original and invariable characteriſtic of fe-"male virtue. Every attribute, which may do honor to the ſex, "muſt be the certain conſequence of ſuch an admirable principle. "The bill in diſpute will, in all probability, by an exertion of its "influence, reſtore that purity of conduct which, till of late, has "formed the diſtinguiſhing *trait* of Britiſh education; and I can-"not, on any rational foundation, conceive your Ladyſhips to be "averſe to a ſyſtem, that has already been productive of ſuch eſ-"ſential felicity. The facility, with which the matrimonial knot "has been proved diſſoluble, is a ſevere reflection on the chaſtity "of our morals. Your Ladyſhips have experienced the truth of "what I advance in frequent inſtances, many within the circle of "your deareſt friends, and muſt be conſcious of the criminal avi-"dity which promotes a malady ſo malignant. The right rev. "author of the motion appears, in my judgment, to have maturely "conſidered the baleful conſequences naturally concomitant on ſo "univerſal an anarchy, and by debarring the offending parties "from an honorable connexion, has excluded every argument "which might influence a woman, not totally loſt to every ſenti-"ment of delicacy. † I forbear to mention the neceſſary circum-"ſtances ariſing from a firſt interview, previous to the expiration "of a Calendar year. ‡ Your Ladyſhips, however negligent of the momen-

* Daughter and heir to the late Sir C.... H..... W.....

† Their Ladyſhips denied that to have been their caſe.

‡ A public-ſpirited body of Friars, within the French King's dominions, have, by dint of *long application* and *ſevere ſtudy*, diſcovered an infallible *antidote* againſt any ſuch ill conſequences.

" momentary miſconduct, muſt, in your ſubſequent reflections,
" call to mind the perpetuated diſgrace you, by that means, incur
" in a ſecondary view; and though a tranſient period of life may
" reſcue yourſelves from the noxious poiſon, be aſſured the inno-
" cent victims to its violence will ever criminate you as the au-
" thors of their unmerited ſufferings. Theſe conſiderations will,
" I think, prove of ſuch importance, and the ſubſtance of them ſo
" detrimental, that no oppoſition can reaſonably be formed to a
" bill which enforces a contrary train of ſentiment. By giving it
" your neceſſary ſanction, thoſe criminal allurements to infidelity,
" which fallaciouſly impoſe on a credulous mind, will be removed,
" and your Ladyſhips will be enabled to view the guilt and un-
" happineſs of conjugal diſſention, in their natural and genuine
" deformities. It may perhaps be aſſerted that ſuch repreſenta-
" tions tend rather to object againſt the motion, and that by not
" ſuffering it to paſs, the proſpect I have drawn will diſappear; but
" can you, my Ladies, be deliberately guilty of ſuch an inſult on
" the very eſſence of virtue, as to check the wiſe regulations
" which aim ſo viſibly at its ſupport? † The ſenſe of honor can-
" not be ſo totally loſt among you, that you ſhould perſiſt in the
" extirpation of chaſtity, merely from an inſenſibility to its ami-
" able ſweetneſs, as the ſource of every domeſtic ‡ virtue. From
" the preſent unhappy conſtitution of things, every woman may
" incur the criminality of matrimonial perjury, without any other
" condemnation than that of her conſcience, which has been effi-
" caciouſly lulled to ſleep previous to the commiſſion of ſo un-
" happy a miſchief. Such a glaring defect in the policy of go-
" vernment, joined to the uninterrupted poſſeſſion of what her
" paſſions have pourtrayed as a moſt deſirable, and perhaps com-
" mendable acquiſition, becomes a ſtrong inducement to a weak
" and ill-governed mind, already biaſſed in favor of licentious pur-
ſuits.

† An abſurd queſtion, and anſwered immediately by ſeveral of the aſſembly.
‡ The term has been long obſolete, unleſs with Lord D.....th.

" ſuits. Laws, therefore, for the correction of ſo notorious an
" evil, are, in my opinion, conducive to the moſt ſalutary effects,
" and will, I truſt, meet with the concurrence of thoſe of your
" Ladyſhips, who regard the reſpect due to your own honor, and
" that of your families."

D....SS OF D.....RE.

The D...ſs of D.....re, in a very pleaſing ſtile of argument, defended Lady D....'s aſſertions, and made ſome animated remarks on the ſeveral articles of her Ladyſhip's addreſs, which peculiarly concurred with the noble D....ſs's ſentiments. Her Grace made a ſtriking diſtinction between the paſtimes of gaiety and innocence, and the dear-bought, and fatally experienced pleaſures of a criminal connexion. The eloquent Peereſs expreſſed herſelf particularly intereſted for thoſe who, like herſelf, had not yet been converſant in leſſons of gravity, and who, from an early introduction into life, were novices in the ſevere duties, incumbent on the married ſtate. The houſe appeared to liſten with ſerious and willing attention to the ſeveral arguments her Grace introduced for the revival of long-neglected chaſtity, and ſuffered her very admirable addreſs to meet with none of that ſcurrilous interruption, which uſually diſtinguiſhes right honorable oppoſition.

C.....SS OF A.....N. *

On the cloſe of her Grace's ſpeech, Lady A.....n † roſe, and lamented with energy of expreſſion the little regard paid to matrimonial engagements, and the univerſal indifference teſtified by both parties on the ſolemnization of ſuch ſacred rights. Her Ladyſhip confeſſed great cauſe of anxiety in the diſſolute morals, which marked the character of our preſent N-----y, but conceived ſuch

* Her Ladyſhip's undiminiſhed affection at the preſent criſis of Lord A——'s affairs, can only be equalled by the fortitude with which ſhe ſubmits to ſo *bitter* diſpenſations.

† Daughter and coheir to the late Sir P.... W.....

pleas a very inadequate ſanction to the ſtructure generally built on them. The proſpect of reformation was not, in many inſtances, ſo remote, as to authorize a total change of ſcene on the part of the wife, neither was it the leſſon of humanity to augment the misfortunes of a family, by giving an additional poignancy to their diſtreſſes. Her Ladyſhip reviewed the material articles of the bill, and entered very warmly into the propriety of their contents. Her ſenſibility was too great to treat of ſeveral appoſite circumſtances without emotion, and a flood of tears expreſſively marked the intereſted concern ſhe took in their defence. The D....ſs of Ru....d, * and Lady H.....d, † were much affected at this unexpected turn in the debate, and never appeared in a more amiable view, than in the kind anxiety they profeſſed for her Ladyſhip's ſituation. By means of their joint endeavors to reſtore her wonted complacency, Lady A.... recovered that natural ſoftneſs, which ſo peculiarly characterizes her manners, and after diſplaying an abundant ſhare of perſuaſive eloquence, reſumed her ſeat without any tokens of diſapprobation from either party.

C.....SS OF C..KE. ‡

Lady C..ke endeavored to ſhare thoſe ſilent marks of reſpect, which Lady A.... had ſo forcibly exacted from the devotees to ſlander and malevolence, but diſcovered the inefficacy of her attempt, from the general buz which followed her extempore diſſertation on the fickleneſs of conjugal conſtancy. Her Ladyſhip's ill ſucceſs ſeemed to throw a gloom on the few right honorables of her party. Some moments paſt before any farther effort was made on either ſide for a continuation of debate. The calm, however, was of ſhort duration.

* Siſter to the Duke of B.....t

† Siſter to the C...ſs Dow. of H.....

‡ Lord C----'s moſt inhuman behaviour as a huſband will excuſe any reproaches her Ladyſhip may have been guilty of.

D....S

D....SS OF B.....D. *

After ſome previous remarks on the general tenor of the bill, her Grace the D----ſs D-w---r of B-----d condemned the propoſition it contained, and addreſſed the houſe, as nearly as we can recollect, in the following terms. " At a juncture, my Ladies, ſo alarming, " and in a cauſe ſo unconſtitutionally repugnant to female liberty, " my freedom of ſentiment will not, I hope, be judged the com- " mon jargon of B-----gate malevolence, or the produce of a ſoil " leſs rich than that which diſtinguiſhes my origin. Rather let " this auguſt aſſembly impute any nice and critical deviations I " may inadvertently be guilty of, to my zeal for their intereſts, " and my univerſal attachment to the preſervation of their natural " privileges. It has been a growing maxim with myſelf, and, I " truſt, a well experienced truth with many of your Ladyſhips, " that the ſubſervience of woman ſhould be directed by her con- " venience. The impoſing authority of men is of ſo groſs a nature, " and unleſs duly curbed, is frequently carried to ſo conſiderable " a length, that a non-reſiſtance on our part, ſerves only to ſubju- " gate us more enormouſly, and render females the mere mechani- " cal, paſſive miniſters of their inimical procedures. If the evils " of a ſtate, if the dangerous doctrines, originating from the in- " troduction of ſuch boorish forms of *government* as thoſe in the " bill, have no influence with your Ladyſhips, will ye not take " fire at the lurking treachery it contains? Will not your eyes " be open to the miſchievous operations which muſt enſue from it? " In a word, will ye not be made ſenſible that, by ſuffering ſuch " a ſyſtem to be authorized, ye loſe the valuable ſupport of all " your ſuperiority, free will? My Ladies, I confeſs I am ani- " mated. I glory in it. 'Tis a virtue to exerciſe a tongue of " ſlander, when the exiſtence of ſcandal is rapidly approaching to " a criſis;

* Her Grace is ſiſter to Earl G...., and leads the B.....d party, who are now wavering, as Lord C..... has retired to Caſtle H.....d

" a criſis; for ye are aware, that, when the fuel is no more, the
" flame muſt evaporate. The bench of B---ps conſiſts of charac-
" ters, in many circumſtances, truly reſpectable. The welfare of our
" ſouls is ſuppoſed to be the grand object thoſe mitred ſportſmen
" have in view. I confeſs the propriety of ſuch a chace, nor have
" your Ladyſhips, I preſume, any prevailing objection to ſeclude
" ſo inconſiderable, and ſo ---- a number of Peers, from the grand
" and right honorable aſſembly, for ſo laudable a purpoſe. But
" ſhall their mandates of vengeance be iſſued out againſt the ſex
" with indiſcriminate rudeneſs? Shall grandmothers be equally
" comprehended in this tax on the mind, with novices of ſeven-
" teen? I deprecate ſuch an idea. Your experimental know-
" ledge, my Ladies, is called in queſtion, and I dare appeal to any
" r--t r--vd. of them all, if we are not, in the ſenſe of the nation,
" allowed to have a greater inſight into the good and evil ariſing
" from matters of this denomination, than the moſt ſanguine p---e
" on the bench. Many noble L--ds who handled this ſubject
" previous to the preſent diſcuſſion, have contemptuouſly hinted
" at the frailty of (as they term it) the weaker ſex. The inconſi-
" derate errors thoſe dignified beings have pronounced us obnoxi-
" ous to, are of ſo weak a nature, that they appear calculated
" merely to terrify Miſſes in leading-ſtrings. Seduction, with all
" the various ills annexed to it, has been ſagely introduced in
" defence of the preſent motion, and thoſe chaſte reſtorers of ſuch
" long-exploded tenets as female delicacy, and honor, compli-
" ment us, my Ladies, with giving cauſe to this public ſcrutiny
" into the articles of our faith. *'Sblood*, my Ladies, can women,
" who have had the advantages of rank, who have known the
" ſweets of frightening their huſbands, tamely ſubmit to ſuch an
" inſult on their feelings?---nay, on their deareſt, tendereſt feel-
" ings? From myſelf, and I may venture to aſſert, from thoſe

" of

" of my family connections influenced by my authority, this bill
" will, in all probability, meet a direct and conſiderable oppo-
" ſition *. Our intereſts, and indeed our ſentiments, have hitherto
" preſerved that uniformity in political views, that we ſhall with-
" out doubt be unanimous on a point that ſo notoriouſly makes for
" our private welfare. Conſider the tenor of ſo novel a policy, and
" your Ladyſhips will find it a palpable ſcheme, clearly derived
" from miniſterial deſpotiſm †. The prevalence of ſimilar machi-
" nations has already been ſo ſucceſsful as to ſhackle huſbands, fa-
" thers, and brothers, and ſhall we, the only repreſentatives of in-
" dependence, the only guardians of free ſpeech and action, unite
" in voluntary bondage? No, rather may we quit a ſoil, where
" ſervitude is ſo illiberally welcomed; and where ladies of gravity,
" who with unwearied perſeverance have laboured from their firſt
" introduction to ſociety, in preſerving the rights and liberties of
" of the community, are ſcandalouſly, maliciouſly, nay h—ll—ly
" forbid an honeſt interview with the pretty fellow they admire!
" My Ladies, I aſk pardon for my warmth, but there are many
" of you (I appeal principally to the Dowagers) who muſt, from
" the courſe of things, have the good cauſe equally at heart with
" myſelf. It may be ſaid, the circumſtances of the bill do not
" aim at the widowed ſtate. I grant it, but are not our children
" equally dear to us with ourſelves? Is not the bar, that im-
" pedes their plan of operations, of equal injury to us who are
" originally intereſted in the promotion of them? Let me aſk the
" noble Peereſs in the white and ſilver her moſt ſecret ſenti-
" ments on this ſubject. Excluſive of the good-will ſhe bears her
" very amiable iſſue, ſhe has another object invariably in view; a

* The Duke of D—— has reaſon to *bleſs* the memory of the Duke of B—— for having reſcued him from non-qualification to inherit thoſe honors which fall to his ſhare. Lord J— S— had no conſiderations of the kind, and Lady J— was equally ſentimental with her noble S—ter.

† Poſſibly Lord C—— and Mr. W—— complimented her Grace with the ſacrifice of their emoluments and inclinations.

" ſecond union in matrimony. Whether the eager partiality with
" which ſhe purſues the dear change ariſe from political, or more
" domeſtic attachments, it is not material to determine. A ſatiety
" may, and by the aſſiſtance of her amicable connections, muſt
" enſue, and as inevitably be ſucceeded by a ſyſtem *diametrically*
" diſtinct. In this caſe, my Ladies, a change in meaſures or of
" men, the death of either party, moſt probably of her Ladyſhip,
" are events almoſt inſeparably attendant on the courſe *of a calendar*
" *year* *. The conſummation therefore of the ceremonial rites of
" Hymen may be for ever impeded, and the Lady, however re-
" gardleſs of controul, muſt ſubject herſelf in many ſenſes to the
" annihilation of many intereſting and favorite ſyſtems. On theſe,
" and other equally material grounds, I have ventured to repreſent
" the bill as containing a leading principle adapted to the de-
" ſtruction of our freedom, as an independent part of the creation.
" Your Ladyſhips will, I hope, have no objections to offer, as I
" am ſo well informed of your candor on this head, that it will
" ſurprize me to hear an Engliſh Peereſs diſpute the orthodoxy of
" my ſentiments."

Her Grace might with propriety be ſaid to have taken the lead in oppoſition, as the arguments ſhe introduced appeared thoroughly to coincide with the ſenſe of the houſe. On reſuming her ſeat, the Dow—r Lady A—r † and Lady G——r were on their legs together. Each profeſſed a more than ordinary zeal for the cauſe in agitation, and ſeemed unwilling to wave any privilege that might plead for priority. After unſatisfactory altercations, it was determined to abide by the deciſion of the aſſembly, who pronounced Lady G——r to poſſeſs an undoubted claim to precedency, from the many experimental lights her knowledge of men and manners might enable her to throw on the various niceties of the ſubject in conſi-

* It is ſomewhat ſurprizing her Ladyſhip's fidelity ſhould be of ſuch *very* ſhort duration.

† Her Ladyſhip and the pretty Miſs W—— are ſiſters.

deration,

deration. Her Ladyſhip, after acknowledging the compliment, ſo univerſally paid to the deep reſearches of her indefatigable induſtry, prefaced a peculiar richneſs of argument to the following purport :

LADY G——R *.

" My Ladies,

" Many are the advantages I enjoy under the auſpices of a ſitua-
" tion which your Ladyſhips warmeſt wiſhes have yet been unable
" to reach †. Thanks to my ſtars, for I have no obligation to
" earthly influence ‡, my various purſuits in life have been attended
" throughout with truly authoritative information, and guided by
" implicit attention to national welfare. Miſtake me not, my
" Ladies, when I ſay *national*, I would confine the licentious
" bounds uſually put to this term ; its extent is far too unlimited.
" Give me leave to exclude all *male* pretences to an epithet ſo na-
" turally and conveniently calculated for the ſole uſe of ourſelves.
" The ſources of good and evil, your Ladyſhips will unanimouſly
" confeſs, have no exiſtence but with us. Should not the ſtreams
" then that ariſe from them be obedient to parental controul?
" And yet thoſe ſelf-ſame ſtreams, defiled as ſome of them are with
" filth foreign to our ſhores, have dared not only to uſurp a prior
" authority to our own, but give laws, nay, compulſatory laws, to
" the total excluſion of our ſex's juriſdiction. At this threatening
" period we are aſſembled, my Ladies, for the purpoſe of ſub-
" verting a ſyſtem which ſtabs the vitals of our conſtitution ; and
" I well know, from the many excellent precepts your Ladyſhips
" have heretofore imbibed, that you would prefer the loſs of life
" to that of its invaluable treaſure, a treaſure ſurpaſſing the de-
" ſcriptive fire of eloquence, a treaſure your mothers and grand-

* Daughter to —— V——n, Eſq. By virtue of retaliation her Ladyſhip ſecured her intereſts : a ſeparation only was the conſequence of her *tendre* for the D— of C——.

† Her Ladyſhip was under no neceſſity of connecting with Sir G— T—— through pecuniary views.

‡ And yet ſhe ſeems to have had great reaſon to thank Lord G— for *his* inconſtancy.

" mothers

" mothers have maintained with united and irreſiſtible torrents of
" threats, prayers, ill language, and omnipotent invective *. Re-
" ſources ſuch as theſe have been the ordinary aids called in to the
" defence of our juſt rights. The times were then equally mo-
" derate with the meaſures: a change in the one neceſſarily calls
" for a ſpeedy reformation in ſuch particulars of the other, as are
" inefficient to cope with the violence of a reinforcement. The
" objections I have yet heard ſtated againſt the bill now before
" this aſſembly, are equally the dictates of ſound reaſon and can-
" dor. I only fear they will not meet with the ſerious attention
" adequate to the cauſe in which we are embarked, owing to a
" ſort of puſillanimity which runs thro' the courſe of our debates.
" That manly ſpirit ſo greatly celebrated throughout the territories
" of Britain is loſt, and I dare aver, irretrievably loſt from the
" breaſts of our huſbands. To their wives then ultimately belongs
" a *renouvellement*, if poſſible, of ſo ineſtimable a bleſſing. The
" honorable ſhackles our ſpouſes are graciouſly forging for us, af-
" ford a very ſufficient and ſtriking preface of the purpoſe for which
" they are intended. Shall not we, who have till now demoliſhed
" every barrier of oppoſition, who have nobly worn the breeches,
" and even carried them as the nobleſt bearing of our ſhields, in-
" variably perſevere in curbing magiſterial inſolence? Your Lady-
" ſhips ſcorn the inſult offered in ſuch a ſuſpicion, and will, I am
" convinced, rather at once act openly, as I have done †, than tamely
" ſubmit to ſuch reſtraints as your huſbands pleaſe to put on the
" freedom of your inclinations. I need not waſte time in pointing
" out ſuch parts of the motion as I think injurious to our happi-
" neſs. My life and conduct are every day ſubject to ſcrutiny, and
" I appeal to the language they ſpeak, as explanatory of my ſenti-
" ments. I hate the ſtinting incumbrances of matrimonial chaſtity,

* Surely it muſt have been a valuable commodity; and we ſuppoſe their Ladyſhips were careful to ſecure its reſidence on Engliſh ground.

† Though his R—l H——ſs would have perſuaded the world he had been all the while in the next room.

" and ye know it *. The amendment therefore I ſhall propoſe,
" will, I have reaſon to flatter myſelf, meet the general approbation
" of all well-wiſhers to female felicity. The tenor of it I would
" adviſe to the following purport —That unconditional liberty be
" granted to all females, or if ſuch indulgence be found unmeet, to
" thoſe wedded to Eng—ſh P——rs †, after the term and expiration
" of one calendar year and an half, to be forthwith diſſolved from
" all matrimonial reſtraint and obligation; and if their attachments ſo
" lead them, to contract marriage with any one who may be found
" willing to be party in ſuch an engagement on ſimilar terms.
" The certain advantages which ſociety muſt reap from a ſyſtem
" ſo benevolent, will immediately ſtrike your Ladyſhip's, when you
" conſider the increaſe of individuals it will occaſion, jointly with
" the enviable variety offered in ſo liberal propoſals. Our huſbands,
" well aware of our then omnipotent influence, will be careful to
" do their beſt in every ſhape, while we may terrify them into
" a compliance with the moſt romantic meaſures, by urging the
" facility of an immediate ſeparation."

Her Ladyſhip, after appealing ſeparately to many noble Ladies, in defence of ſuch particulars as were immediately connected with their reſpective intereſts and ſituations, concluded her negative on the original motion in terms of great acrimony, and poignant ſatire againſt many right honorable patroneſſes of the bill.

LADY A——R.

The Dow——r Lady A——r, fearful of having her claim a ſecond time diſputed, anxiouſly waited the concluſion of her noble intimate's harangue, previous to the final ſtorm of —— and ——‡. The oratorical widow ran curſorily through the many DOMESTIC felicities ſhe had experienced during the life of her late ever-to-be-

* I've done the ſtate ſome ſervice, and they know it. Othello, Act V.
† A very reaſonable *douceur* conſidering the fears of loſing principal and intereſt.
‡ Tantæne animis cœleſtibus iræ? Virg. Æn. book I.

lamented L—d, and ſeriouſly vowed ſhe had found a flatneſs in her preſent ſtate, which ſhe could not by any means be pleaſed with. "Reſtraint," ſaid the noble Peereſs, "gives a whet to woman's in-"clinations, and the pleaſures we ſteal, have a reliſh untaſted in an "aſſurance of their being eaſily attainable." Her Ladyſhip made an evident diſtinction between the curbing authority of a huſband, and that of the legiſlature, conſidering it no unſurmountable taſk to lull the one to ſleep, but an Herculean labour to depreſs the gradually increaſing ſtrength of the other. After citing a variety of inſtances, many within her own recollection, of Ladies who had manfully withſtood every oppoſition but that of the ſp——l Court; Lady A—— particulariſed the caſe of many females individually who were, from moſt intereſted motives, anxiouſly waiting the iſſue of their Ladyſhips determinations. "Trembling for the conſequences of "ſuch a raſh attempt," added the elegant matron, "our L—ds and "maſters in the Upper H—ſe, have till now, fearfully avoided a "ſtep, that muſt incur the miſchievous diſpleaſure of their wives; "and as in the articles of matrimony we ordinarily engage a cer-"tain and ſufficient ſhare of authority to ourſelves, methinks it is "no unnatural uſurpation to claim the power and privilege of ſuch "a prerogative." On theſe grounds her Ladyſhip voted for the utter excluſion of the bill, and counſelled Lady G—— to withdraw her motion till a conſiderable majority ſhould have thoroughly effaced every tinge of the preſent ep—p—al ſtain on their indiſputable chaſtity.

Dow—r C——ss of HA—G—N*.

The Dow—r C——ſs of H——ton roſe next to beg the attention of the houſe on a point of ſome importance to the ſubject in

* Her Ladyſhip is aunt to the D— of G——n, and inherits the vivacity of her royal anceſtors. Lord P—— and General C——had long ſupplanted her late lord, previous to his death. On the melancholy event's taking place, the General, with his wonted humanity, *broke* it to the Counteſs in terms of peculiar gentleneſs. How great muſt have been his ſurprize when ſhe clapped him on the ſhoulder with "*Say, upon* "*your honor.*"

controverſy. Her Ladyſhip premiſed the particular circumſtance ſhe intended introducing, by a review of the lives and moral characters of ſeveral very diſtinguiſhed Members of the Sup—r Houſe of P——t, and deduced from thence a natural conſequence of the neceſſity their Ladyſhips were under to cauſe an enquiry to be ſeverally made into the living and p—ch—g of the R——t R——d author of the bill; "For," added the well-informed dame, "if the "tenor of his life be uniformly ſuch, as may authorize a general "condemnation of his tenets, we ſhall not only be enabled to "throw out the different clauſes contained in the motion, but may "ſubſtitute ſome leſs untractable ——, to introduce indulgences "more favorable to the cauſe we have at heart. From the in-"formation, a noble relation of his * ——ſhip's has amply afforded "me, I diſcover him to be a poor ſimple ——, partly recom-"mended to a M—tre by my Lord ——, whom your Ladyſhips "have experienced to be but a doubtful friend to the community. "If we muſt be ſhackled, my Ladies, let the chain be forged by "—— or ——. By ſuffering an *impartial* cenſure on our lives "and doctrines, we ſhall ſhortly dwindle into wives of old, who "knew no law, but from the deſpotic ſway of their huſbands. "The Bp. of —— is the moſt improper man in the world, at an "attempt of this nature. His reſident and experimental knowledge "has been ſo deficient, and his method of framing bills ſo want-"ing in ſpirit, that we have not the leaſt glimmering of a loop-"hole to eſcape by. And will your Ladyſhips encourage ſuch a "bungler as this? A bungler, whoſe motions merely tend to the "ſuppreſſion of far better motions † than his own? A bungler, "whoſe unſociable auſterities are wilful; for I can aſſure the "noble aſſembly, it is no family failing. Surely, my Ladies, the "genius of the times is ſuch, that you will ſhudder at a ſyſtem ſo

* Lord B—— has communicated the beſt intelligence, though he is now ſaid to have quitted any correſpondence with her Ladyſhip.

† What could the noble Peereſs mean?

" oppoſite to every one of your ſentiments."—Her Ladyſhip proceeded ſome moments in a ſimilar turn of reaſoning; and after having commented on particular parts of the bill, expreſſed an abhorrence of the partial ſeverity denounced againſt the female offender, while the more criminal ſeducer was permitted to boaſt his infamy without moleſtation. The noble Peereſs continued her very enforcing harangue by counſelling the houſe to iſſue out a menacing proteſt againſt ſuch of his Majeſty's Miniſters, and ſuch of their meaſures as ſhould thus daringly aim at the root of female ſelf-government; and after reminding their Ladyſhips how neceſſarily it concerned their intereſts to act unanimouſly on the occaſion, ended her addreſs in the following extraordinary ſtile: " My Ladies, you are all well " aware that man is a very ſerviceable, and frequently a very ſocial " animal. The immoderate ſhare we ſubmit to in the diſpoſal of " life's burthens, ought alſo to make him a very obedient and ſub- " miſſive one. Some ſober females, if any there can be met with " on this debate, may, as they think, with great confidential aſ- " ſurance, deduce a ſuperiority on the huſband's ſide, from what " they call the great purpoſe of creation, and running through a " voluminous comment on the ill-founded dominion of theſe lordly " beings, may aſſert the propriety of their argûments, by an ap- " peal to the mandates iſſued to our firſt parents. But let theſe " un-orthodox, inactive miſſes *, for ſurely, none ſuch are advanced " to diſcretion, conſider, that previous to the fall, Eve had but " an inferior ſhare of toil allotted her. On the introduction of " child-birth, nurſing, &c. the tables were turned. Even in the " ſimpleſt times, ſuch duties formed a round of cares, far exceed- " ing the incompetent labors of their ſpouſes. Now that the va- " rious niceties of female education become additional articles in " the account, your Ladyſhips cannot, I think, retain a doubt of " meriting that ſuperiority your huſbands ſhould be compelled to ac-

* Her Ladyſhip without doubt means *miſſes* in experience.

" knowledge

" knowledge on this authority, I vote for an immediate declaration " of independence *."

Her Ladyſhip had hardly cloſed her ſpeech, when notice was given to the houſe that Lord T——d †, with an armed force was preparing an aſſault, in appearance, to the ſubverſion of the Senate, but as his Lordſhip expreſſed, for the purpoſe of reſcuing his much-loved Lady from the jaws of ſuch a many-headed monſter. Lady T——d's countenance expreſſed a more than uſual degree of dread at the apprehenſion of ſo menacing a calamity.

LADY T——D ‡.

The amiable V——ſs had, however, preſence of mind ſufficient to make this ſhort addreſs to the leſs-experienced in matrimonial terrors. " My Ladies, however extenſive may be the privi- " leges of a huſband, they can never, in my opinion, uſurp the " ſmalleſt authority over any other individual than his wife. My " L——d's attack, therefore, muſt be conſidered in a higher de- " gree offenſive, as the many right honorable Members, which " compoſe this body corporate, are diſproportionate to a ſimple " limb of its political arrangement. Your Ladyſhips cannot there- " fore conſider this affront, but as a common injury, and while " you combine to ſhelter me from the rudeneſs of his ungentleman- " like paws, you will have the ſatisfaction to cruſh a moſt detrimen- " tal and inſolent oppoſition in its infancy." The noble Peereſſes without heſitation deputed Lady F——th, with conſent of the Lady P—ſ—t, to notify their reſolutions of defence to the martial V——t. Her Ladyſhip's irreſiſtible dignity, accompanied with a firmneſs of argument, uncommon in the fair-ſex ‖, ſomewhat ſurprized Lord

* Lady H—— ever acted up to her public ſentiments. Free will and fortitude were her favorite virtues, and improved equally under her auſpices.

† Lord T——d married the beautiful, the amiable and accompliſhed B——ſs F—— of Ch——y, heir to the family of Sh——y, C——ton D——x, and Pl—g—t. Dublin ſtill ſpeaks with regret for the loſs of her Ladyſhip, and with bitter reflexions on — — — — —.

‡ Daughter to —— M——gom—y, Eſq.

‖ Which Lord F—— has ſeverely experienced on his head and ſhoulders, previous to the conjugal nooſe.

T——d and his valorous adherents. A torrent of eloquence, rich in the moſt powerful expreſſions * which language could admit of, gained a final victory on the female ſide. The ſons of Mars were ſtruck with amazement at the unlooked-for reſiſtance, and their noble leader, grounding his arms, ſubmiſſively aſked pardon for the hoſtile appearance his well-meaning friends had made; he but beſought them to reſtore his wife, his own dear chicken, the only conſolation of his *heavy hours*. The noble Lord ventured to hint that Lady T——d was too young for their Ladyſhips inſtruction, that ſhe was a fit companion only for ſuch a fond old fellow as himſelf, and that were the dear creature more verſed in right honorable machinations, his poor grey locks muſt be the ſufferers †. Lady F——th knew from experience how impolitic it was to capitulate with a climacterical huſband ‡, and diſplayed her uſual generalſhip in the reply ſhe made to his *very piteous manifeſto*; ſhe repreſented to his Lordſhip how ill-judged a thing it was, to have ever connected merely with the view of pleaſing himſelf, and how cruel to exclude Lady T—— from parties of pleaſure abroad, when he muſt know no ſuch enjoyments were to be expected at home. After a very candid condemnation of the ſeveral miſdemeanors the amorous Peer had been guilty of, her Ladyſhip denounced vengeance, the fouleſt vengeance againſt him, if he, or any of his *corps*, dared make any hoſtile aſſertions of their iniquitous and unconſtitutional demands. The ſtrenuous defender of her ſelf-created rights, who might with propriety be ſtiled the Engliſh Joan of Arc, had hitherto addreſſed the King's forces from the caſement. On concluding her animated harangue, her Ladyſhip turned diſdainfully from the *regulars*, and *Te Deum* ‖ was *nem. con.* vociferated from all ſides of the Houſe of Aſſembly. Lord T——d well-knowing, like the Trojan exile, that

* Natural and acquired.

† Lord T———d has found the ill ſucceſs of family feuds, in trying the experiment with his ſ—, Lord F——.

‡ Except on a death-bed.

‖ Their Ladyſhips permitted the uſual thankſgivings for *form*'s ſake.

there

there were no laurels gained in the conqueſt of a woman *, added a farther conſideration of his own, and wiſely thought the renown of conquering *many*, would not repay the riſque. Unhappily, the noble leader had no marquee wherein to hold a general conſultation, ſo without the form of previous deliberation, all operations for a ſiege were ordered to be diſcontinued till farther notice, and the M——G—— of the B—— of O—— retired to his private meditations like the *ſon of Peleus*, parted from his bed-maker *Briſeis* †.

The *male* conducted aſſault had occaſioned ſome ſhare of conſternation among the timorous members of the Congreſs, and ſerved to diſcover the truth of matters more evidently than it could be gathered from the fallacious declarations of their Ladyſhips. The roſy hue forſook the cheeks of thoſe Peereſſes, whoſe *provinces* lay at the diſpoſal of their huſbands ‡. Some diſaffected members endeavoured to conceal their *dependence*, by joining in a ſuperior peal of joyous acclamations. Their efforts however proved inſufficient; many ladies of great fame, who had been ſtudious on every occaſion to give the lie to their Lord's ſupremacy, and who were thought to have carried matrimonial indifference to the higheſt pitch, were extravagantly diſconcerted at Lord T——'s unexpected viſit, and expreſſed the violence of their agitations, by the difficulty with which they were pacified on Lady F—th's return.

Lady Dowager ST——E ‖.

Lady Dowager St——e was ſurprizingly ruffled, and began to recant all the menaces ſhe had thrown out againſt a huſband's prerogative. The fortitude her Ladyſhip had ever diſplayed in her

* ——— Nullum memorabile nomen
Fœmineâ in pœna eſt, nec habet victoria laudem. Virg. Æn. book II. line 583.

† Homer's Iliad.

‡ Lady A——r preſerved her *native* bloom without the leaſt diminution of its beauty.

‖ Heir to the family of B——s. Her Ladyſhip's firſt huſband was one of the Sixteen Peers for Scotland, from whence ſhe lays claim to a ſeat, as Dowager.

private parties, was now no more. The noble Dowager was about to preſent a formal complaint of * Mr. ——'s ill uſage, when Lady F—— diſpelled the enormity of her terrors by bringing the agreeable intelligence that the royal army had retreated to —— † Park.

The D—ss of GR——N ‡.

The D—ſs of Gr——n, though ſhe had taken no part in the debate, ſeemed much agitated, leſt her very *graceful* lord and maſter ſhould ſuſpect her allegiance to his infallibility.

The Hon. Mrs. N——.

The Honorable Mrs. N——, though ſhe profeſſed her Lord to be of a ſpiritual and pacific temper, was in ſome dread, leſt a regard to temporal intereſt ſhould call off the P——te's attention from higher concerns. She trembled at the idea of a laſhing, though from the hand of a B——, and envied the happy lives of her equals in rank, the Honorable Mrs. C—— ‖ and Mrs. H——ffe §.

An infinite majority of P——ſſes retained their uſual imp——ce amidſt the ſurrounding dangers, and ſeemed inſenſible to any impreſſions their huſbands could adminiſter. The Dow——rs were intolerably bold on the occaſion, and reproached the *young and ſore-afraid* with imbecillity, and irreſolution. During the ceſſation of debate ſeveral *curtain verities* were indiſcriminately brought to light; but as they did not interfere with the bill in controverſy, it will be

* When the Captain's finances are low, he *forcibly* perſuades Lady S—— of the ſalutary benefits of leaping five-barr'd gates, and bets on the greater probability of her *pitching* ſafe.

† Hyde, or St. James's.

‡ Siſter to Sir J—— W——ley, and neice to the D——ſs of B——d. The late D——ſs of G——n married the nephew of her Grace of Bloomſbury. How nice a ſenſe of honor ſeems to have run through the ſentiments of theſe extraordinary noble Perſonages!

‖ Lady to the A—— of C——.

§ Siſter of J—— C——we, Eſq. of C—— Hall, Cheſhire, and lady to the B—— of P——gh.

unneceſſary to introduce them. Good order being once more reſtored, the Lady P——ſ——t was about to read the bill, for the purpoſe of dividing, when Lady *N—— begged leave to make ſome curſory remarks on *the extraordinary and truly Epiſc—l Motion.* Lady N——, Lady N——, was repeated univerſally, and her Ladyſhip acknowledged the impartiality which prevailed.

Lady N——.

The noble Peereſs's ſentiments were delivered nearly in the following words:

" My Ladies,

" I heartily join with an eloquent ſpeaker in this day's debate, " in conſidering marriage merely as a temporary concern. The " obſolete article of *till death do us part*, is of ſo rude a texture, " that I foreſee it will, in a term of years, be totally inadmiſſible, " and the little regard paid at preſent to its authority, makes that " period ſtill leſs remote †. An improvement in the matrimonial ſervice ſhould therefore be inſiſted on, ſince there is no longer an " accompliſhment of the duties it expreſſes; and ſuch a concern " as this ultimately reſpects the ſpiritual bench. Thoſe right reverend miniſters of morality ſhould form a code of laws anſwerable " to the ſpirit of the times, and as our manners have long ſince " been rebellious to *proclamations* human and divine, it is neceſſary " that the vanquiſhed party ſhould at length quit the field, and a " more tractable ſovereignty be inſtituted amongſt us. The bill " now depending is of ſo extraordinary a nature, that it not only " puts a negative on the above particulars, but whereas the reſtraints of the church merely command an internal and voluntary " obedience to the ſeveral unfaſhionable tenets they contain; this " ſtrangely plotted piece of ſpiritual mechaniſm exerciſes an imme-

* Her Ladyſhip has a ſeat as Dowager C——ſs of B——.
† The noble Counteſs is a *living* truth of her remark.

" diate and afflicting vengeance on thoſe who have forſworn the
" fidelity they were led to profeſs. To ſuffer the ignominy of a
" divorce from an odious fellow, who like * ——, may have, from
" politic views, acted in concert with the adulterer; never to be
" bleſſed in a legal union with the man, whoſe merit has been the
" all-effecting machine of your infidelity: to become an exile from
" the world, in what is called an honorable view, and for the ſpace
" of a calendar year to be debarred from a ſhare of thoſe privi-
" leges, which are permitted and enforced by heavenly inſtitution,
" are marks of deſpotiſm, which ſtand unexampled in a country,
" where the liberty of the ſubject is not utterly extinct. Such,
" my Ladies, are the articles I have produced, as tyranni-
" cally oppreſſive. The arbitrary principles they contain muſt be
" glaringly viſible on the ſlighteſt review. Your Ladyſhips need
" not wait the execution of ſuch fundamental evils, before you are
" aware how fatally they aim at the immediate introduction of
" ſlavery, nor does that ſlavery conſiſt in ſimple ſubjection to one
" tyrant only; it extends throughout the univerſal ſyſtem of
" matrimony. Every individual of our ſex, from the moment ſhe
" becomes a wife, ſigns herſelf the willing ſubject of her Lord's
" imperious government. Should ſhe be anxious to get relief from
" the galling chain, I now ſee no proſpect of ſuch an event. Our
" laws are ſo conſtituted, that the huſband, by avoiding certain
" frantic irregularities, may prevent either a ſeparation or divorce †.
" A woman's miſery is no prevailing argument in favour of her pe-
" titions, nor will ſuch pleas be in any reſpect attended to, provided
" ſhe have no marks of brutality to expoſe. The laſt expedient of
" a woman thus ſituated has hitherto been conſulted with ſucceſs.
" Your Ladyſhips make the application merely in your own de-

* The D— of G—— and Lord O—— are ſaid to have projected the *transfer* of the now Lady O——.

† Sir G—— W——.

" fence;

" fence; you continue to *forſake all other*, till your huſbands forget
" *to cheriſh and comfort* *. When thoſe very eſſential requiſites are
" defective, the ſolemnization oaths are firſt broken by *the man*.
" *The woman* would be ſinful, in *forbearing*. While matters re-
" mained in this ſtate, there exiſted a kind of partiality in the pre-
" rogatives of each party. The huſband's offences could not,
" without a high degree of female indelicacy, be pleaded before a
" court of juſtice by the wife. She therefore took a different me-
" thod to make him ſenſible of the affront, and he, if bleſſed with
" any portion of ſenſibility, was equally aſſiduous in diſplaying the
" honors he had acquired. A divorce took place †. Each was happy
" in the change. The Lady beſtowed her legal affections on a more
" amiable object, and the gentleman uſed his influence to a ſimilar
" purpoſe. I need not embelliſh that halcyon period with unneceſ-
" ſary flowers of rhetoric. Many of your Ladyſhips have *moſt
" intimately* felt the golden bleſſing of ſuch an æra, and from that
" conſideration will be peculiarly intereſted in the iron ſcene ap-
" proaching into view. The preſent fatal reverſe cannot but diſ-
" cover its horror far and wide. That unexpected hour, when a
" woman ſhall, by virtue of parliamentary edicts, be for ever
" ſnatched from the poſſeſſion of the man ſhe admires, cannot but
" compoſe a ſtriking page in the volume of time, and when the
" reaſons of ſuch reſtraint are duly weighed, they will neither re-
" dound to the reputation of our huſbands, or the grave policy of
" our C——ts of Parl——t.— In ſhort, my Ladies, the cruelty of
" ſuch a bill is not of a piece with the refinement of the preſent
" age. It rather ſuits a period of barbarity, wherein the ill-planned
" maxims of ſtate politics have proved ſubverſive of their own
" purpoſes. The article which denounces vengeance againſt any
" *regiſtered* connection for the ſpace of twelve Calendar months,

* See the Marriage Service.
† Her Ladyſhip is deep in hiſtorical information.

" makes

" makes us w—— in ſpite of our teeth *. That women will be
" reſolute to —— their huſbands, if thoſe huſbands deſerve the fa-
" vour, is a truth undeniable, and an illegality that challenges pre-
" vention †. Thoſe laws therefore that forbid the healing ſuch an
" offence, without being able to probe the wound itſelf, muſt be
" deficient, for when the diſorder has *taken root*, time only can put
" an end to its progreſs. The very *conſiderate* author of the motion
" ought therefore to have ſtiled his bill, An Act for the effectual
" furtherance of ——— and ———. Your Ladyſhips can find
" no advantage in ſuffering ſuch a parl——t—y monſter as this to
" ravage the country, for you are ſenſible you may ſtill live in a
" ſtate of ——, without ep—cop-l authority. Many peculiar in-
" conveniencies will attend your different intereſts individually,
" and in a variety of ſhapes, by a compliance with the motion. I
" have reaſon therefore to hope, from the ſeveral arguments intro-
" duced by many P——ſſes of this truly honorable Aſſembly, that
" ſo unconſtitutional a bill will meet with general diſapproba-
" tion."—— ‡

The Lady P—S—T.

The Lady P—ſ—t having quitted her chair of ſtate, ranked as a ſimple Peereſs, and after complimenting Lady N—— on the very extenſive field her Ladyſhip had taken in the debate, made a comparative ſtricture on the different arguments introduced by each party in defence of their ſeveral opinions. The noble and eloquent B——ſs declared her anxieties to be effectually at an end, from the ſanguine expectations ſhe had now conceived of a total excluſion of the bill. Her Ladyſhip confeſſed the agreeable ſurprize ſhe had experienced in finding ſo few of that moſt honorable houſe in alliance

* *When ſilly women go aſtray,*
Their ſtars are more in fault than they.

† And bid defiance to puniſhment.

‡ Her Ladyſhip's may be ſaid to be the moſt argumentative addreſs in the day's debate.

with Ch—ſt—y *. Her intentions, had the majority been in treaty with virtue, were to promote a ſufficient number of Iriſh P—ſſes, and Commoners Ladies, to the ſuperior rank of Peereſſes of Great Britain, and by that means to ſecure an adequate *force* for the defence of the *coaſt*, in caſe of an *unlooked-for* attack from the enemies to A——y. " For," added the magnanimous deſcendant of † Sch——g, " our Iriſh friends are no luke-warm partizans, no " wavering ſhilly-ſhally advocates in defence of *the Bill of Rights*. " They have ever ſtoutly ſtood up for *the liberty of the preſs*, and " preſerve an honorable antipathy to *ſearch-warrants*. Nor do they " confine their intereſts to the ſiſter kingdom only, England has " been bleſſed with the favorable aſpect they beſtow on *B——ſh* " *manufacture*; and though their huſbands may be natives of the " dominions whence they receive their titles, believe me, their " cic——beo's are of our own *produce* ‡. As circumſtances are now " ſituated, I truſt there will be no neceſſity of calling in ſo potent " and numerous *a militia*. The *ſtanding army* we have at preſent " encamped will be ſufficient to repel all epiſc——l inroads."

The D——ss of L——— ‖.

The D—ſs of L—— roſe, in ſome haſte, to combat the bold aſſertions of the hereditary ſenatreſs, and expreſſed her ſurprize at the unmerited *compliment* her Ladyſhip had paſſed on the P—ſſes of Ireland. Her Grace's figure and addreſs added much to the elegance with which ſhe delivered a train of ſentiments that did honor to the drooping cauſe ſhe wiſhed to revive. The houſe was ſtruck with the convincing mildneſs of her patriotic defence, and could not refrain from ſilently requiring ſome further proofs of Lady C——s's bold declaration. The D—ſs in perſon called on her Ladyſhip for an explanation of the facts ſhe had advanced, and ap-

* She muſt have been more ſurprized, had ſhe found it otherwiſe.
† Her Ladyſhip's grandfather married the coheir of the Duke of Sch——g.
‡ We return the compliment however, and in a larger degree.
‖ Late Miſs St. G———.

pealed to the authority of recent information for the ſupport of her well-grounded oppoſition. " The luxury that reigns in this metro-
" polis," continued the amiable Peereſs of both kingdoms *, " is an
" evil unknown throughout the extent of Ireland. Our ſex par-
" take, in a proportionate ſhare, of that ſimplicity and manly virtue
" which characterize Hibernian manners; nor is the hardineſs
" which diſtinguiſhes our huſbands and brothers enervated by the
" effeminacies ſo injurioufly introduced and ſo univerſally patro-
" nized in Great Britain. From that impolitic refinement you ex-
" perience from your younger years, may be dated the progreſſive
" growth of ſuch evils as affect the timid virtue which ſhould pro-
" tect your unſuſpecting innocence. The eaſe and elegance which
" reign throughout the palaces of the great, give admiſſion to a
" ſimilarity of manners, and the variety of lethæan felicities abroad,
" obliterate the amiable duties requiſite at home. To the thought-
" leſs indulgence of theſe fallacies, you owe the unintentional com-
" miſſion of irregularities which miſbecome the daughters of Virtue;
" and even theſe were trivial, did they not engage attention by their
" repeated allurements, and did not thoſe allurements throw an
" obſcurity over a ſubſequent ſcene, which, to a mind yet innocent,
" need but be viewed to be abhorred †. The temptations you are
" obnoxious to, have no influence with us: their excluſion is one
" grand cauſe of the rectitude of our conduct; and it is on thoſe
" characters only, who have a conſtant intercourſe with yourſelves,
" that ſuch an opprobrious reflexion as Lady C——'s, can with juſtice
" be pointed. Ladies, nominally Iriſh, but whoſe manners are,
" and have ever been guided by Engliſh education, may poſſibly be
" influenced by ſuch principles as the Lady P——ſ——t remarks ‡.

* The Duke of L——— is a Viſcount of England.

† The Ducheſs ſeems to have miſtaken the caſe.

‡ Juſt as their new created Lords have neither intereſt in that kingdom or regard for its welfare.

" When

" When I ſay education, I would not be thought to mean thoſe ori-
" ginal leſſons which they are taught to imbibe in their infant ſub-
" ſervience to ſcholaſtic authority. During that period, I pronounce
" them advocates for virtue. It is in the ſocial and amicable en-
" gagements they form, on entering the world, that I perceive the
" firſt ſeeds of a vicious inclination. Their maturity is ſpeedily
" haſtened, and the vegetation of thoſe excreſcences, which the
" ill-informed Lady P—ſ—t has diſcovered, may be a concomitant
" circumſtance with the ripeneſs of the plant. Such Iriſh Peereſſes
" as thoſe, her Ladyſhip may perhaps call in with convenience: the
" native and reſident nobility of that country will ſcorn the dignity."

The Lady P—ſ—t begged pardon for the interruption ſhe had occaſioned in the debate, by the introduction of a ſubject foreign to the great cauſe *ſur le Tapis*, and requeſted the noble Ducheſs to conſider the ruſticity of thoſe antique maxims, which her Grace had endeavoured to model for the preſent times. The ſanguine leader of her party was abundantly ſtrenuous in defence of the bold attack ſhe had commenced on Hibernian chaſtity, and declared the veracity of her information to be undeniable. Her Ladyſhip expreſſed herſelf fearful leſt the Ducheſs ſhould have confined her knowledge to the back ſettlements, and intreated the noble Peereſs to employ her emiſſaries within the more moderate compaſs of D—lin. Time and experience would, ſhe aſſerted, ſufficiently explain the truth of her aſſertions.

The C———ss of J———.

The C——ſs of J—— ſurveying the houſe with a becoming aſſurance, appealed to each Right Honorable individually, if ſuch *bandied* arguments as thoſe of the two unintereſting diſputants could be of the ſmalleſt ſatisfaction to the aſſembly. " We are
" come here," added her Ladyſhip, " for the purpoſe of curbing
" the overgrown inſolence of *ſtale morality*, and ſhall our attention
" be employed in liſtening to the ſlander of private pique? I bear

" no

" no reſentment to either party for the animated efforts they are
" making in the practice of ſcurrility, but for ſcandal's ſake, let
" ſome other moment be ſet apart for the diſplay of ſuch man-
" œuvres. The appointment we have at preſent made is for poli-
" tical harangue. To ſuch engagements, therefore, let us be ſteady
" adherents, and, in this firſt day of ſeſſion, prove ourſelves equal
" to the taſk of reverſing the decrees of parliament. Our huſ-
" bands crouch already beneath a domeſtic yoke; let the *Salique*
" freedom of their ſenate endure a proportionate degree of ſervi-
" tude. For the ſpeedy accompliſhment of this great end, I
" would propoſe an abſolute diſmiſſion of the bill. The im-
" mediate ſubſtitute of ſo unwarrantable an infringement of
" our rights cannot, with ſound policy, be yet conſidered *. When
" we have, in our *curtain lectures*, convinced *the rabble* of their
" unparalleled rudeneſs, we ſhall find a convenient ſeaſon for im-
" poſing on them ſuch laws as *our repreſentatives* are bound to abide
" by. The future exiſtence of the three eſtates of this kingdom
" may ſtill be permitted, provided each be ſtedfaſt in our intereſts.
" Of the firſt, I have moſt reaſon to doubt: his M—— has never
" ſhewn more than complaiſance to the diſappointed ambition of
" ſuch of our ſex as have tried the experiment. M—— of H——,
" like Lady † S—, are compelled to endure the indifference of *looks*
" *unmeaning*, and ſurvive the tyrannous inſenſibility, but in the
" proſpect of a more benign S——r ‡. In the Houſe of P——, I
" experience a more favorable landſcape. Thoſe titled ſenators,
" whether ſp— or temp—, are ſo agitated with *hymenæal terrors*,
" that they will give up all ſtate-conſiderations for that more
" weighty one of *home-tranquillity*. The C———ns are ſomewhat
" more refractory, I confeſs, but may be *brought over* at the next

* Whenever it may take place, her Ladyſhip will be the firſt to give it countenance.

† The preſent Lady S— L——, quondam Lady S— B———, wiſhed to enſnare his M——— at the C——l R——l, but played her very *potent* artillery in vain.

‡ The P—— of W—— has given *convincing* proofs of his eſteem for the ladies.

" general election. Their intereſt with *St. Stephen* depends wholly " and ſolely on kiſſing*, ſo that we may make them pay our price. " I leave the diſpoſal of the Sixteen P—rs to thoſe of your Lady- " ſhips, who have experimental knowledge *du goût d'Ecoſſe*. From " my own preſumption, I would venture a pecuniary application, " with a proviſo, in caſe of the Duke of †G———'s refuſal. I " loſe ſight of the ſubject-matter in debate, therefore ſhall ſit down " in expectation of a conſiderable majority for throwing out the " motion."

LADY L———N.

Lady L——n roſe, on the noble Counteſs's ſilence, and, after expreſſing a neutrality in the preſent controverſial debate, requeſted the attention of the houſe on a point which required mature deliberation, previous to the riſing of that very honorable ſociety.—" Your Ladyſhips," added the much injured Peereſs, " have with " great political *fineſſe* well conſidered the different interpretations " which may be put on the articles of the bill, and ſeem reſolved " to ſtrain every nerve, rather than ſubmit to the reſtraints it im- " poſes. I argue not in defence, or oppoſition of ſuch particulars, " as my ſingle intereſt will be inſufficient to predominate in either " ſcale. The only purpoſe of my riſing is to engage your good in- " tentions in favor of a circumſtance not totally unconnected with " the papers before the houſe. In caſe of a divorce, ſuppoſing the " huſband to have already ſquandered the fortune he received in " marriage ‡, I ſhall introduce a motion for the purpoſe of reſti- " tution, in whatever ſhape the wife may judge convenient. As " your Ladyſhips ſeem anxious for the *more effectual encouragement*

* Lord T— P— C—, now Earl of L——, was neceſſitated to ſuffer the above indignity from a *greaſy* arrangement of butchers wives in and about Clare-market.

† His Grace was proof againſt the ſnares of Lord N——, and commiſſioned Lord G— G—— to tell him ſo.

‡ A very home argument, to his Lordſhip's diſgrace. Should a reformation in his manners have taken place, a report loudly ſpeaks, Lady L—— may hope for an exiſtence of that affection, which can never be ſaid to have revived.

" of divorces, you muſt, in all probability, be deſirous, for the " honor of the ſex, to make them as agreeable as poſſible to the fe- " male party. The recovery of her own fortune * in the poſſeſſion " of her Lord's patrimonial eſtates will, I judge, be anſwerable to " the wiſh of any of your Ladyſhips who may have the proſpect " of a legal ſeparation in view. I ſhall, in conſequence of this, on " a future day, move that ſuch a bill receive the ſanction and autho- " rity of this very honorable houſe of Corr——n."

LADY F——TH.

Lady F—th declared her thorough approbation of the motion, and profeſſed herſelf happy in the aſſurance of its being very warmly ſupported. The *very noble* V——ſs confeſſed ſhe had no *intereſted* views in ſeconding ſuch a propoſal, and therefore hoped Lady L—— would conſider the part ſhe took in favor of the bill, to proceed ſimply from her ſenſe of its propriety.

The D—ſs Dowager of B—— and Lady C——y had long labored under ſevere agitations. They had, however, ſo far moderated their natural warmth of temper, as to ſit ſtill with decent reſignation, till Lady F——'s reiteration of complimentary ſmall-talk wakened their violence to its higheſt pitch. Her Grace roſe, without waiting the V—ſs's permiſſion, and broke the thread of her diſcourſe with, D—n it †.

Lady C—— ſeconded the indignity with, " Zounds, my Ladies, " have ye loſt your wits? let's call for tea, or coffee." The ſtudious inveſtigators of the paſſions innate in the brute creation will probably have remarked the riſing fury of grimalkin, when ſhe is at

* Mrs. P—— had the ambition to hope an amiable wife might effect a reformation in Lord L——. The very ſpeedy proofs ſhe had to the contrary were peculiarly ſevere, and might have been more rigorouſly ſo, had not the late Lord ſecured a proviſion for her maintenance, in an aſſurance of the difficulties ſhe muſt otherwiſe have had to combat.

† Her Grace is ſuppoſed to have improved her oaths from the French.

oratorical

oratorical variance with an adverſary of the canine breed. Such geniuſſes alone are able to deſcribe the conflicting violence that agitated the heroic ſoul of Lady F——. Had the *right honorable* birth of the *fiery V——ſs* permitted the ſuſpicion *, we ſhould have judged the ſyſtem of her nerves to have been under the impulſe of *convulſions*, ſo univerſal and hideous were the diſtortions ſhe exhibited. Her Grace of B——, like *Major Oakley* in the comedy, ſwore ſhe would ſacrifice the firſt that offered a drop of water to her recovery, and brandiſhed her *arm* † in token of defiance. Such hoſtile menaces from ſo dread a Dow—r, intimidated the moſt reſolute, and amongſt the reſt, the *wilful* C——ſs ‡ T——, who had compaſſionately drawn a very convenient piece of furniture from her ſide-pocket. The generous *cordiality* viſible in her Ladyſhip's features, required no proofs of the *honeſt integrity* with which ſhe acted. At ſo critical a moment, when the ſtrongeſt *Eau de vie* might be judged the moſt applicable, the *good ſoul* could not refrain from broaching her pocket-bouteille, and had juſt ventured to pronounce her liquor *ſheer*, when the deſpotic D——ſs iſſued out orders for *quarantine*. Lady F—— therefore was ſuffered to be her own phyſician, and after generally removing the diſorder from her corporeal frame, transferred its violence, *individually*, to her tongue. The organs of utterance were now extraordinarily affected, inſomuch that they had proceeded on

* Vide a ballad, intituled, M—— O—ſt—rs.

† The late D—— commiſſioned her Grace to pen all his challenges.

‡ Miſs C——ll was ward to the late Lord Chancellor T——. His Lordſhip was equally anxious with his ſon for her alliance with that family, by an union with the preſent E—l. Miſs C—— objected much to the propoſal, but was finally overruled by her guardian and her lover. Lord T—— has ever preſerved an inviolable affection for her Ladyſhip, though mortified by returns of glaring indifference. The noble Peereſs on the birth of her firſt child forcibly repreſented the many cogent reaſons ſhe had for declining the like honor a ſecond time, and with difficulty permitted Lord T—— to be bleſt in ſo amiable a daughter as Lady C—— R—— Since that time the C——ſs has inſiſted on ſeparate beds, and perſiſts in her extraordinary reſolution. His Lordſhip has ſhewn his regard for her *few* virtues, by parting with more than two-thirds of his fortune in her favor. Dr. T——, had he not been the beſt of brothers, might have profited on the ſubject of her Ladyſhip's indifference.

their office ſome time before there could be found any diſtinction of *ſharps*, *flats*, or *naturals*. When the inharmonious diſtributions of he ſev eral jarring ſounds were tolerably arranged, her Ladyſhip, like a band in full chorus, gave a licentious looſe to the extravagances of her anger.

LADY F——.

" My Ladies,

" Am I not called hither to ſit in judgment? Am I not ſum-
" moned as a Peereſs of the realm? Am I not qualified in every
" particular to hold a ſeat in this aſſembly? And will ye ſuffer me
" to be inſulted? To be affronted with indignity? Thus publicly
" affronted? Shall Peereſſes, who have nothing in the world to
" recommend them but their impudence, Peereſſes, whom all the
" world has pointed at, Peereſſes, who have long been deſtitute of
" delicacy and honor, dare to calumniate me with ſcurrility?—with
" inſolence?—with blaſphemy? I ſcorn the inſult. I would have
" you know, my Lady P—ſ—t, and you, ye tools of an ambitious
" woman, that I have a rectitude of ſoul within me, which will
" ſtand the teſt of all your machinations. Think ye, that I ſhall
" crouch beneath the uſurpation of a factious *traitreſs?* That I
" ſhall turn a cat's paw of the B——d party? No, I abhor the
" thought. Let ſervile ſycophants court ſuch alliance from ſelfiſh
" principles. Let them enſnare their children in the ſlaviſh union,
" I will have none of it. I have *no children**. So let the noble La-
" dies well conſider, nor let the *very honorable* Peereſs †, that ſwore
" at me laſt, think I recall my words; I repeat it for her farther in-
" formation, Had the noble Ladies been common bunters, I could
" forgive the injury. Such a ſtile of reaſoning were then to be ex-
" pected; but to be interrupted with *D—n me*, from a D——, and
" *B—ſt you*, from a V——, is a declaration of hoſtilities which
" requires no common interpreter. I ſhall therefore give it as my

* Macbeth, Act V.

† Lady C—— was Miſs C——ck of A—d—n.

" opinion,

" opinion, that my Lady P—ſ—t ſhould command the offending " parties to pay the cuſtomary forfeit for prophane ſwearing, and " beg pardon of the houſe for the general affront they have been " guilty of. For the indignity I have experienced myſelf, a fu- " ture occaſion will, I truſt, afford me ſatisfaction *."

D—ss Dowager of B——.

The vindictive Peereſs had hardly ſat down, when the Ducheſs of B—— ſtarted up with looks brimfull of anger, and a front that would have frighted any *hero* of antiquity †. The *heroines* of ages paſt might poſſibly have ſtood the brunt of her terrific viſage, though dreadful as ſhe is fabled, Meduſa was a cherub to her. After a tranſitory preface of the fouleſt aſpect, the noble Dow—r broke the black and awful ſilence to the following effect:

" Moſt Potent Senatreſſes ‡,

" That I have d——'d the d——ty P——ſs who ſpoke laſt, it is " moſt true; true I've inſulted her: and by the worth ‖ of mine " *audacious* ſoul, I'd do it, wer't again. But I am ruffled, and " loſe the convincing authority of my arguments by the angry dreſs " in which I clothe them—to be calm, therefore, my Lady " P——ſ——t, who is this free-born daughter of independence, " this patriotic ſcourge of deſpotiſm, this mighty enemy to bribery " in office; this gallant aſſertreſs of her hereditary dignities §, " this animated deſcendant of the intrepid Portia? I know her

* Her Ladyſhip and the D——ſs might ſtand a tough combat, as they are peculiarly bleſſed with perſons moſt engagingly *athletic*.

† King Henry's alluſion to the deſtruction of Troy. Richard III.

‡ Moſt potent, grave, and reverend ſenators, my very worthy and approv'd good maſters,
That I have ta'en this old man's daughter
It is moſt true. Othello, Act I.

‖ Or by the worth of thine eternal ſoul
Thou'dſt better have been born a dog, Iago — — — Ibid. Act III.

§ Lady F——'s birth, education, and conjugal alliance are ſubjects notoriouſly public. See The Town and Country Magazine for March 1776. Mr. R—— and Lady Pyebald.

" not. I fear, my Ladies, you have introduced ſome *commoner*
" amongſt us. Who brought her hither? For the preſervation of
" order and decency, my good Ladies, if the very authoritative
" Lady be a peereſs, tell me, which of our ſiſters *chaperroned* her
" *here?* I would fain ſcrutinize the authorities on which this zeal-
" ous diſciple of her ſect claims the prerogative of ſharing in
" our councils. To you, therefore, my Lady P--ſ--t, with all
" ſubmiſſion, I appeal for ſuch particulars as may prove ſatisfac-
" tory on the occaſion *."

Lady C——y's reſentment was no way inferior to the D——ſs's. It only ſought for vent, and eagerly ſnatched the opportunity of levelling all ceremonious diſtinction of perſons. Her Ladyſhip anxiouſly watched the cloſe of the noble Dow——r's appeal, and ſeconded it with a vehemence of oratory that would have immortalized the moſt *gouty* † in the aſſembly. Her right honorable adverſary alone was calm amidſt the thunders of the enemy; and though, from the poſt ſhe held, her Ladyſhip was expoſed to the immoderate violence of *ſmall ſhot*, the noble V—— *ſtood* her ground with abundant reſolution ‡.

The Lady P—ſ—t now interfered; and by means of threats, prayers, and medley arguments effected a truce, which her interpoſition only could accompliſh. The parties at variance gradually modulated their loud ſtrains to unintelligible murmurings, and lowered the lofty pitch of *reprobate* controverſy to the ſimple *keys* of ſlanderous whiſpers. The *peace-making* Baroneſs took this opportunity to remind the houſe of the purpoſe of their ſummons to parliament; and expreſſed a wiſh to take the ſenſe of that noble aſſembly on the propriety or impropriety of giving ſanction to the Bill for preventing Adultery: the right noble Peereſs declared herſelf

* Sir Robert Walpole and Mr. Pulteney vilified each other with the moſt opprobrious language, though they profeſſed and preſerved a mutual cordiality in private.

† See Lord Briſtol's Imitations.

‡ Her Ladyſhip had been an adept in *pelting*.

for

for an immediate diviſion, as the illuſtrious members of the ſenate had conſidered every argument which might make *for* or *againſt* the matter in queſtion. Her Ladyſhip proceeded to recommend unanimity as the ſureſt baſis of their uninterrupted exiſtence as a parl——t, and adviſed them, individually, to act up to the tenets they had hitherto profeſſed. Should an univerſal aſſent, either to the approbation or excluſion of the bill, be inadmiſſible, by reaſon of a difference in opinion, the worthy Speaker brought them to forego all private conſiderations, and direct their conduct ſolely with a view to benefit their country. While their Ladyſhips acted on ſuch principles, the *quondam* M——ſs aſſured them of the indubitable efficacy of their counſels, and the final ſucceſs of their moſt ſanguine undertakings.

LADY * G——.

Lady G—— C——ſs Dow. of D—— begged the Lady P—f—t to conſider the precedency due to her, and thoſe of her very honorable compeereſſes, who were ſo by virtue of limitation to themſelves, independently of the honor they might have acquired by marriage; and obſerved that it would be no derogation from the rank of the eſpouſed wives of Engliſh Peers, to ſuffer the ſaid Peereſſes to divide ſeparately on the motion before them.

R—L H——ss the D—ss of G——R †.

The D——ſs of A——ll very ſtrenuouſly ſupported the propoſition, and ſpoke largely on the propriety of ſuch a diſtinction, but was oppoſed with equal warmth by her R—l H——ſs the D—— of G——, who condemned the unprecedented latitude of ſo im-

* Her Ladyſhip was co-heir to the great Duke of A——. His Grace was an Engliſh Peer by the title of Lord G——, and his daughter enjoys the ſame rank, with limitation to her ſons by the late Mr. C—— T——. Charles was always allowed to be a happy adventurer, and never more ſo than in the above connexion. The Duke of B—— and her Ladyſhip always ſat at different tables. The death of her Grace of N—— terminated a long conteſt between the Ducheſs and Lady G—— on the ſubject family dignities.

† —— d——r to Sir Edward W——, widow of Lord W——, and ſince married to the D—— of G——

politic an act. The puiſſant Princeſs conſidered ſuch hereditary dignities as authoritative in their concerns with female deſcent, and general ſucceſſion, but maintained the illegality of liſtening to ſuch claims in an aſſembly where the *wives* of Engliſh Peers were, from the tenor of the ſummons, called together for the purpoſe of preſerving their privileges *in matrimony*. Her R—l H——eſs expreſſed an intention of moving for an excluſion of ſuch *Peereſſes* as ſhould not, at the ſame time, be the actual wives or dowagers of Engliſh Peers, but as their number was inconſiderable, her H——ſs ſhould not interrupt their Ladyſhips with a propoſal of the kind.

The Lady P—ſ—t counſelled Lady G——— to withdraw her claim; and perceiving no farther continuance of debate from either party, proceeded to read the bill, as an introduction to the ſentence, which the majority were to determine.

On calculating the number of hands in favor of the motion, the tellers reported the ſum total not to exceed *fifteen*. The diſſentient voices were far more numerous. After a deliberate and cautious *notation, one hundred and ſix* were found ſtaunch advocates for throwing out the bill. It was obſerved, that all the dowagers and *twice* eſpouſed were unanimous in putting a negative on the B—p's good intentions. Had there been any degree of moderation among *them*, his Lordſhip's partizans might have had a ſhew of victory. It is ſuppoſed they had long forſaken it as a loſt cauſe; and were it not ſo, the glaring inequality of the combatants muſt effectually prevent the minority from riſking a ſecond pitched battle in defence of conjugal chaſtity. No reinforcements being expected, the vanquiſhed party had only one ſtep to take, and that, rather in defence of the cauſe they ſupported, than in defiance of the enemy.

Thoſe of their Ladyſhips who had profeſſed obedience to K—— and P——l——t, abhorring illegal independence, and ſcorning neutrality, voted that the following proteſt ſhould be entered in the Journals of the Houſe, and left it ſigned on the table for that purpoſe:

1. *Diſ-*

1. *Diſſentient.* " That we think it unconſtitutional, and in " the higheſt degree illegal, for any Peereſs individually, or any " aſſembly of Peereſſes collectively, to oppoſe, or in any ways " prevent, or aſſiſt in preventing the execution of ſuch laws " as the three eſtates of this kingdom ſhall have authorized " and enforced.

2. *Diſſentient.* " That thoſe of their Ladyſhips who have " put a negative on the B—p of L——'s motion, are enemies " to the happineſs of this country, and traitreſſes to the Britiſh " government.

3. *Diſſentient.* " That conjugal fidelity is one great means " for the preſervation of domeſtic tranquillity, and for the pro- " motion of general felicity, wherefore the oppoſers of the " bill are avowed enemies to their own honor and the wel- " fare of their huſbands.

" AB——D——N, H—TF—D, P———Y ‖,
" B——F——T *, LE———R, R——ND,
" D———TH, L—L—N, RU——D §,
" D——SH——RE †, M—CH—R ‡, SP——R **."

The noble Ladies, who compoſed ſo *inſignificant* a minority, were ſcarcely known to have quitted the aſſembly, on their taking leave of the council-room. The rebel army had ſo evident a ſuperiority from the harmony which univerſally prevailed, that nothing now remained but to hoiſt a flag of victory, and direct their whole artillery againſt the L——ds and C——ns. Good-will and reſolution, the two moſt prevailing articles in an account of that nature, were by no means deficient. Each Peereſs, individually, appeared eager for the onſet; *the charge* had been long *prepared* ‖‖‖, and all were anxious for the ſucceſsful *commiſſion* of their reſpective *bullets*. While mat-

* Daughter to the late Admiral B———n. † Daughter to Earl Sp——r.
‡ Daughter to Sir J—— D———d. ‖ Daughter to ——— B—ll, Eſq. and ſiſter to the D——ſs of H———n, and Lady A—— P——. § Daughter and heir to the late E—— of A——y.
** Daughter to —— P—ntz, Eſq.
‖‖‖ Macheath, Beggars Opera.

ters remained in this ſituation, and a general buz of approbation ran through the aſſembly, Lady D——, in a tone ſomewhat above the *murmuring pitch*, begged leave to ſilence the honorable whiſperers, for the purpoſe of liſtening to her Ladyſhip's introductory plan of hoſtile operations, previous to the indiſcriminate carnage of *battle royal.* The Lady P—ſ—t enforcing the propoſition, and *Taiſez-vous* * being repeatedly proclaimed by Mrs. ——, common cryer, the noble C——ſs delivered her ſentiments as follows:

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" My Ladies,

" It is almoſt needleſs for me to repreſent to your Ladyſhips, how " ſucceſsfully our manœuvres have hitherto been conducted, and " how impotent has been the oppoſition formed to their overthrow. " I remind the noble authoreſs of counſels ſo politic, of their con- " firmed efficacy, ſolely with a view to eſtabliſh the purpoſes for " which they have been planned, and to the attainment of which " they are ultimately directed. The Bill for preventing Adultery is " ſtill in being, though annulled among ourſelves; and its influ- " ence is of ſuch a nature, that we may be the victims of its venge- " ance, without the privilege of putting a ſingle *nay* on the ſcan- " dalous enormities it profeſſes. For the further demolition of ſo " threatening an edifice, I recommend therefore to your Ladyſhips " the exerciſe of every inſtrument which may conveniently forward " the purpoſe of a ſiege, and for more effectually intimidating the " garriſon, I would at the ſame time propoſe an immediate ſeizure " of their right reverend leader. This cannot be conſidered but as a " ſtroke of the ſoundeſt policy; for though it may be ſaid, that the " enemy will inſtantly proceed on the *offenſive*, our frequent change

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" does penance at the feet of my Lady P—ſ—t, in ſincere and " woeful contrition, your Ladyſhips may, I think, in conformity " to your *known benevolence*, ſuffer the battered D——l to return " to his bench without *ſeverer* moleſtation."

Shouts of applauſe pervaded the ſenate univerſally, and tokens of approbation were elevated on every ſide. Moderate *attention* having again reſumed *her ſeat*, the Lady P—ſ—t appointed Lady F——th, the Dowager Lady Har——n, Lady P———t, Lady T——t, Lady Co——y *, Lady C——y, and the D——ſs Dowager of B——d, as the only very able hands for executing the above admirable office. The D—ſs † *Dowager* of P——d was thought ſufficiently well-bodied for the purpoſe, but begged to be excuſed the indignity of toſſing in company with Lady F——th.

Lord P——th, Lord N——n ‡, and Lord S———s, were therefore voted as excellently cut out for ſuch ſervice; and as they had never approved themſelves very troubleſome fellows, either in the ſervice of miniſtry or oppoſition, the noble P—rs were conſidered as peculiarly *built* for the preſent occaſion. The Lady P—ſ—t therefore deputed *embaſſadreſſes* for the purpoſe of taking meaſure of the above L—ds §, that each might be quite at his eaſe in the female accoutrements neceſſary to their diſguiſe. The report of their embaſſy was deferred till the next day of ſeſſion.

All uſual ceremonies being adjuſted, the right honorable Lady C——s declared the Act for preventing Adultery of none effect; and the houſe, after praying for the inefficacy of all ſuch obſtacles, adjourned till the morrow.

* Late Miſs St. J——.

† Her Grace is heir to the noble families of H——y, C——ſh, H——s, and V—.

‡ His Lordſhip enquired which party Lord D——ſt eſpouſed; and on being informed he was a Minority-man, ſwore he'd *ſweat* through thick and thin for their Ladyſhips ſatisfaction.

§ When Lord P—— was found a third more conſiderable in bulk than his noble comrades.

FINIS.

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